PHILOSOPHY OF THEISM

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BY

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

For this edition the 'Philosophy of Theism' has been recast, and to a great extent rewritten. It has also been condensed, in the preface and throughout the lectures, partly by being purged of redundancies which are perhaps pardonable in oral communication of ideas, but are less suited for thoughtful readers; and it now appears in one volume instead of two. The book has been further modified by occasional introduction of new matter, intended to present its central principle in fuller light. The whole has been arranged in Three Parts, preceded by two preliminary lectures in which an expanded Natural Theology is defined, and articulated in its three logically indemonstrable data. A Retrospect of the central course of thought follows the last Part.

It is hoped that these changes may make the book less unworthy of the indulgent reception and sympathetic criticism with which the first edition has been signally favoured abroad, in America and in Australia, not less than in this country. In its new form it may also be more adapted to assist reflection on the fundamental questions of human life, in those educational institutions into which it has been received.

The five lectures in the First Part deal with three forms of speculation, each of which would reduce the universe of

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reality to One Substance or Power; and the lectures represent total Scepticism as the *reductio ad absurdum*, alike of Universal Materialism, Panegoism, and Pantheism, when those Monist speculations are pressed intrepidly into their issues. This Part is chiefly critical and negative.

In the Second or Constructive Part, the theistic conception of the three data is unfolded, not as a direct consequence of deductive or inductive proof, but as founded on our spontaneous moral faith in Omnipotent Goodness at the heart of the Whole, taken as an inevitable (conscious or unconscious) presupposition in all human experience—the reconciling principle in our intercourse, scientific or moral, with the Power that is universally at work. God is presupposed, and in a measure revealed, in the presuppositions of universal order and of universal adaptation; and is further revealed in the often dormant, but indispensable, moral and spiritual implicates of human experience, which need to be awakened into conscious and practical life by external events and institutions. The reality of human experience is found to involve the reality of omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent moral Providence, to which the emotion and will that go to constitute our final Faith respond, so making conscious or unconscious Religion the chief factor in the history of mankind. This Part in a degree unfolds the metaphysical *rationale* of theistic faith.

The Third Part comprehends five lectures, concerned with the Great Enigma of Evil, presented at least on our planet, which seems to contradict the fundamental moral faith, and, by disturbing the religious or optimist conception of existence, leads to pessimist scepticism. The *impossibility* of an *unomniscient* intelligence demonstrating the supposed contradiction, and thus transforming our universe into an untrustworthy universe, with which one can have no intercourse, is the attitude primarily assumed towards this Enigma. But further considerations are proposed, by

which the difficulty seems to be mitigated even to human apprehension, pointing to modes of escape from the dismal alternative of a scepticism which would involve Science and Goodness in a common ruin. In particular, there is the fact that the universe, or at least this planet, seems to be adapted to the progressive improvement of persons who have made themselves bad, suggesting that a slow personal struggle towards the Ideal, rather than original and constant perfection of persons, may be implied in finite personal agency. There is also the possibility of spiritual advance through what may appear to be interference by Omnipotent Goodness with the divine natural order, for the restoration to goodness of persons who have made themselves bad, but which may really be normal operation of the Universal Power, according to incompletely comprehended Order. And, lastly, there is the room afforded for final adjustment, and for the satisfaction of Omnipotent Love, that is opened through the mystery of man's physical disappearance by death in the divinely constituted universe, and the consequent ultimate venture of theistic faith or expectation. These are examples of mitigations of the Great Enigma that is presented on this planet,—an enigma which, if demonstrably inconsistent with Infinite Goodness or Love, would paralyse science, and moral development of the Ideal Man in the individual.

The philosophy initiated in these lectures may perhaps be called either Humanised Idealism or Spiritualised Naturalism. It seems to be the reasonable attitude towards his own life and the universe for a person like man, who is confined by his small share of experience to a knowledge which —real as far as it goes—is intermediate between Unconscious Nescience and Divine Omniscience. It is for philosophers or theologians, in the gradual progress of philosophy or theology, to show how far, and under what articulate conceptions, even in man's intermediate position, his indispens-

able final *credenda* may become for him *intelligenda*. And, as with Plato and Aristotle, Origen and Aquinas, Berkeley and emphatically Hegel, philosophy is found, by different routes, to culminate in theology, or religion in its intellectual expression. If the universe, as realised in human experience, is religious in its final conception, philosophy and theology at last unite intellectually.

"Natural Theology," thus philosophically expanded, must be distinguished from the natural theology which has often borne the name. About sixty years ago, with the latter in view, Lord Macaulay wrote thus: "As respects natural religion, it is not easy to say that a philosopher at the present day is more favourably situated than Thales or Simonides. He has before him just the same evidences of design in the structure of the universe that the early Greeks had. The discoveries of modern astronomers and anatomists have added nothing to the force of that argument which a reflecting man finds in every beast, bird, insect, fish, leaf, flower, or shell. All the great enigmas which perplex the natural theologian are the same in all ages. The ingenuity of a people emerging from barbarism is sufficient to propound these enigmas. The genius of Locke or Clarke is quite unable to solve them. The Book of Job shows that, long before letters and arts were known to Ionia, these vexing questions were debated with no common skill and eloquence under the tents of the Idumean Imirs; nor has human reason in the course of three thousand years discovered any satisfactory solution of the riddles which perplexed Eliphaz and Zophar. Natural theology is not a progressive science. . . . But neither is revealed religion of the nature of a progressive science. All divine truth is, according to the doctrine of the Protestant Churches, recorded in certain books; nor can all the discoveries of all the philosophers in the world add a single verse to any of these books. It is plain, therefore, that in divinity there

cannot be a progress analogous to that which is constantly taking place in pharmacy, geology, and navigation. A Christian of the fifth century with a Bible in his hand is neither better nor worse situated than a Christian of the nineteenth century with a Bible—candour and natural acuteness being supposed equal. It matters not at all that the compass, printing, gunpowder, steam, gas, vaccination, and a thousand other discoveries and inventions, which were unknown in the fifth century, are familiar in the nineteenth. None of these discoveries and inventions has the smallest bearing on the question, whether man is justified by faith alone, or whether the invocation of saints is an orthodox practice. It seems that we have no security for the future against the prevalence of any theological error that has ever prevailed in times past."

The reader will consider how far the philosophy or theology to which this book is an introduction is consistent with this discouraging view, or with the unconciliatory dualism which separates "natural" from "revealed" religion, according to the assumption of Lord Macaulay. He will judge whether the elimination (on account of man's intermediate position) of enigmas which have perplexed past ages, and which still perplex, may not open the way to a sane progressive exercise of human reason, rooted in theistic faith with all that theistic faith implies, in disposing of the final questions which man requires to deal with somehow. Religion on its intellectual side is surely more advanced now than it was among the early Hebrews or in Homer. Fresh reflection by successive generations of thinkers upon the inevitable *credenda*, in order to convert them more fully or philosophically into *intelligenda*, combined with advancing interpretation of the divine revelations given in external nature, and in the inspired spirit latent in man, seems to afford ample scope for progress in that theology which, in the deepest meaning of nature, is

the most natural of all. The eternal gospel of Omnipotent Goodness, latent in humanity from the beginning, is unfolded in the divine human nature of the Ideal Man, and is gradually unfolding in human life and history. And if faith in Omnipotent Goodness, with all that this involves, is the root and spring of human experience and science, no changes in that experience, no discoveries in science, no historical criticism, no future events in history, neither things present nor things to come, can ever show the unreasonableness of this final faith, or deprive the human race of divine consolation and healing power.

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February 1899.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

Two subjects above all others have a universal interest. One of them always concerns all beings, but especially all persons, in all worlds. The other is of human concern only. The former relates to the moral meaning of the Universe, in which each person has to play his part, and its final moral trustworthiness. It has to do with the *character* of the Universal power, in continuous intercourse with which each person lives, in and through his ethical personality and his environment, without his own leave too, by the bare fact of existing under moral conditions. The other subject is the alternative of evanescence or permanence after Death, as applicable to human persons. Do they all finally lose their conscious personality in physical death; or do they continue in self-conscious life, notwithstanding the dissolution of the body—it may be with added intellectual and spiritual power, as a consequence of relief from its limiting conditions—after the body has served the end of permanently individualising the human spirit?

Is our environment essentially physical and non-moral, or is it ultimately divine? Is his visible body the measure of the continuance of each man's self-conscious personality? These two correlated questions underlie human life. Neither of them, I think, can be got rid of on the ground

that it is interesting only speculatively, or that it is practically indeterminable.

Natural Theology, in the philosophical meaning of the term, is face to face with both these questions. For the word "natural," in the ancient and large meaning of Nature, is applied not only to the world of material things and their metamorphoses, but also to the world of persons or moral agents, and sometimes even to the sum of real existence, temporal and timeless, finite and divine. To follow "nature" is accordingly to follow reason—including moral reason. The philosopher has to consider whether men are doing this when they are proceeding upon the religious conception of the universe as its final conception; whether they are required by reason to accept a wholly physical or non-moral conception as the highest attainable; or whether they need to withdraw from every endeavour to interpret themselves and their surroundings, and must subside in speechless, motionless, agnostic despair. It is in a large meaning of Nature that I take the term Natural Theology to comprehend rational treatment of the universally interesting problem found at the root of human life. Deliberate study of it belongs to liberal education, especially in the condition in which we find modern thought. It should be the outcome of this remarkable Scottish Foundation by Lord Gifford, which admits of so many beneficial adaptations.

In the following lectures the critical reader cannot fail to find conclusions sustained by reasonings that are not fully unfolded, and important questions either passed over or subjected to superficial treatment. It is hoped, however, that the order of thought which I have tried to follow may lead persons disposed to reflect on a path where more abundant fruit may be gathered by their own hands. I venture to ask that the work may be looked at in its

reasoned unity, and not as a series of isolated discussions; unbiassed, I hope, in its intention, by any interest that is at variance with what is true. The short time for preparation that could be given by the academical authorities who honoured me by this appointment has not permitted me to explore as I could have wished the vast and ever-increasing relative literature. To escape the confusion of mind apt to be produced, in these circumstances, by much reading, I have confined myself to a sincere exposition of thoughts gradually reached in a life devoted to kindred pursuits. Some of them have already found expression, in a less explicit form, chiefly in notes and dissertations included in my editions of the works of Berkeley and of Locke and biographies of those philosophers, as well as in lectures to students in the university of Edinburgh.

The religious conception of the universe is adopted in these lectures as its true conception, on the ground that, unless the Power universally at work is Omnipotent Goodness, there can be no valid intercourse of Man with Nature, which instead has to be avoided, as the action and revelation of a suspected Power: the perfect reliability of the Universal Power is presupposed in the reliability of experience. The history of man is a record of collision between sceptical distrust of his nature and environment, on the one side, and moral faith and hope in an environment that is trusted in as ultimately Divine, on the other. It presents a competition between final Doubt and final Faith for the deepest place. In the earlier lectures the voice of the Sceptic is prominent. Afterwards Faith makes itself heard, as that which must at last underlie the utmost possible doubt, because the indispensable condition of any scientific or moral intercourse with the ever-changing universe of external nature and man. But sceptical criticism is still valuable for unfolding the *rationale* of final faith in the perfect goodness of the Power that is universally at work.

That the method I have adopted may be called anthropomorphic or anthropocentric is not, I think, a reasonable objection to it, if all man's intercourse with reality must be under human conditions, and is possible so far only as the universe is adaptable by man ;—not in humanly inaccessible Omniscience. The ultimate relations of men, in the fulness of their spiritual being, to the realities amongst which they were, without their own will, introduced at birth under inevitable intellectual and moral postulates—not Omniscience as at the divine centre—*this* surely is the only philosophy or theology that man is able to entertain, or that is needed to satisfy his necessities. This is the realities in their relation to man, when man is recognised as more than a sentient automaton, yet as less than omniscient. The difficulties found in ultimate moral faith and hope arise largely from oversight of what humanly limited knowledge must be in the end.

That a mixture of the abstract Spinozism which ignores change, and philosophises *sub specie eternitatis*, with the empirical agnosticism of David Hume, which reduces all realities to inexplicable successive appearances, is in this century working in the main current of thought in Europe and America, in sympathy with analogous ideas in India and the East, is a consideration which was present to my mind. Spinoza and Hume were seldom forgotten. Nor was their service to truth overlooked, in the way of deepening and vivifying the timid conventionalism which ecclesiastical theology sometimes exemplifies.

It is difficult to discuss the questions of man and the universe in their final relations without making a large and unacceptable demand upon the reflective power of the reader—at any rate, a greater demand than is made by a Society novel. Yet I am well aware that this book falls far short of what might be reached in this respect by a more powerful philosophical imagination and a more lucid

and penetrating intelligence, directed by artistic literary faculty. The defect has been largely supplied since. English literature has been enriched by a treatise on 'The Foundations of Belief' by Mr Balfour, in which the reader finds the basis of theology investigated in a manner that rivals Berkeley or Hume in luminous expression of subtle thought. Without venturing to offer observations upon an argument conducted with a somewhat different design, I may express the satisfaction with which I have found a sanction in Mr Balfour's reasonings for the equal final insolubility of physical science and theology; and for their common foundation in what might perhaps be called the "authority" of the collective moral reason of mankind, as distinguished from direct logical proof. Two other eminent men of affairs have also added lately to the debt which religious thought owes to illustrious statesmen, since Bacon and Leibniz set the example. The world may be grateful to Mr Gladstone for the critical expositions in which he has powerfully recommended and reintroduced the chief English work of the eighteenth century in the philosophy of religion, thus associating his name with that of Bishop Butler. And the Duke of Argyll, with characteristic argumentative strength and eloquence, has explained the teleological conception of the universe on scientific grounds in his 'Philosophy of Belief.' That in the closing years of the nineteenth century three of the most eminent leaders in public affairs should have thus placed themselves on the side of final Faith in the struggle with final Doubt, is no insignificant sign of the time in this country and in the world.

University of Edinburgh,
September 1896.

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PRELIMINARY

PHILOSOPHY OF THEISM.

LECTURE I.

THE UNIVERSAL PROBLEM.

Personal.

My first words must give expression to the emotion which I feel on finding myself once more admitted to speak officially within the walls of this ancient university, with which, as student, graduate, and professor, I have been connected for sixty years. For it is sixty years in this November since I first cast eyes of wonder on the academic walls which now carry so many memories in my mind, and which to-day are associated with an extraordinary responsibility. In the evening of life, in reluctant response to the unexpected invitation of the patrons of the Gifford Trust, I find myself, in the presence of my countrymen, called to say honestly the best that may be in me concerning the supreme problem of human life, our response to which at last determines the answers to all questions which can engage the mind of man. No words that I can find are sufficient to represent my sense of the honour thus conferred, or the responsibility thus imposed, upon one who believed that he had bid a final farewell to appearances in public of this sort, in order to wind up his account with this mysterious life of sense.

It is an appalling problem which confronts me, and in-

The final human problem and the attitude of Simonides.

deed confronts us all, for all must practically dispose of it in one way or another; and I am now required to handle it intellectually. One may not be ready to say with Pliny, that all religions are the offspring of human weakness and fear; and that what God is, if indeed God be anything distinct from the world in which we find ourselves, it is beyond man's understanding to know. Yet even the boldest thinker, when confronted by the ultimate problem of existence, may desire to imitate the philosophic caution of Simonides, when he was asked, What God was? — in first demanding a day to think about the answer, then two days more, and after that continuously doubling the required time, when the time already granted had come to an end; but without ever finding that he was able to produce the required answer; — rather becoming more apt to suspect that the answer carried him beyond the range of human intelligence. Often in these last months I have wished that I could indulge in this prudent procrastination, taking not more months only but more years to ponder this infinite problem. But after the threescore years and ten, this is a forbidden alternative, if I am to speak in this place at all. I see at hand

> "The shadow cloak'd from head to foot,
> Who keeps the keys of all the creeds."

Forms in which the problem of the universe may be expressed.

Man's ultimate question about his life in the universe is at the heart of Theism. Philosophy asks what this illimitable aggregate of ever-changing things and persons really means, if indeed it means anything. What is the deepest and truest interpretation that can be put by me upon the world in which I found myself participating when I became percipient, and with which I have been in contact or collision ever since I began to live? Ought a benign meaning or a malign meaning to be put upon it? This is, surely, the most human question that can be raised: no man can avoid giving some sort of response to it in the motives of his life, if not in philosophic thought. In what sort of universe—divine, or diabolic, or indifferent—and for what purpose, if any, am I existing

consciously? What is the deepest and truest meaning of this ever-changing universe in which I am now struggling? What the origin and the outcome of its endless flux? Is the Universal Power perfectly reasonable and morally trustworthy? or is the whole morally chaotic and misleading, with only transitory semblance of even physical order? or must I remain for ever ignorant, and therefore unable to adopt either of those alternatives?

The human problem of the universe disturbs modern thought.

It is this problem of the ultimate meaning and purpose of human life in the universe, or whether indeed there is any purpose in it, that I find at the heart of the subject that has been intrusted to me, for free but always reverential discussion. It is a many-sided subject, which each lecturer is invited to discuss at his own point of view, with the advantage to truth of its being thus looked at on many sides—one, too, that is more than usually disturbing feeling and faith, in this outspeaking era of European and American civilisation.

Lord Gifford's instructions for dealing with it.

When I was asked to engage in this work, I turned to Lord Gifford's Deed of Bequest, in the hope that it might contain articulate directions with regard to the object-matter to be investigated, the method of investigation, and the chief end of the proposed inquiry. I found, under each of these three heads, particular instructions, but more or less ambiguous.

It is Infinite Being, and so an absolutely unique Object, that we have to inquire about.

As regards the proposed matter of inquiry, it seems to concern an Object that is absolutely unique. It cannot be made visible or tangible; nor is it even finite, as objects studied in natural science are, and as the word *object* seems to imply. This unique Object, if object it may be called, is thus spoken of in the Deed of Foundation:—"God, the Infinite, the All, the First and Only Cause, the One and the Sole Substance, the Sole Being, the Sole Reality, and the Sole Existence";—more particularly, "the nature and attributes of God," and "the relations which men and the whole universe bear to God." "Science" of this is called "Natural Theology in the widest sense of the term."

Next I find something about the method of conducting

The Infinite Being is to be inquired about in a scientific spirit.

this unique investigation. Strict scientific method is enjoined, according to the analogy of the natural sciences, unrestrained except by evidence, with consequent obligation to follow facts, in pursuit of whatever is found on the whole to be reasonable. As thus: "I wish the lecturers to treat their subject as a strictly natural science, the greatest of all possible sciences, in one sense the only science—that of INFINITE BEING; without reference to, or reliance upon, any supposed special, exceptional, or so-called miraculous revelation. I wish it to be considered as astronomy or chemistry is. . . . The lecturers shall be under no restraint whatever in their treatment of their theme. For example, they may freely discuss (and it may be well to do so) all questions about man's conceptions of God or the Infinite; their origin, nature, and truth; whether man can have any such conceptions; whether God is under any or what limitations; and so on—as I am persuaded that nothing but good can result from free discussion. . . . The lecturers appointed shall accordingly be subjected to no test of any kind, and shall not be required to take an oath, or to make any promise of any kind; they may be of any denomination whatever, or of no denomination at all (and many earnest and high-minded men prefer to belong to no ecclesiastical denomination); they may be of any religion or way of thinking, or, as it is sometimes said, they may be of no religion; or they may be called sceptics, agnostics, or free-thinkers, . . . it being desirable that the subject be promoted and illustrated by different minds."

With a view to man's highest well-being and upward progress.

Finally, the code of directions suggests that a broad social purpose of utility is to be kept in view throughout the inquiry. This is indeed the chief end of those lectureships on "Natural Theology in the widest sense of the term." It is intellectual enlargement for a human and practical purpose. One finds what follows:—"I having been for many years deeply and firmly convinced that the true knowledge of God—that is, of the Being, Nature, and Attributes of the Infinite, of the All, of the First and only Cause, the one only Substance and Being; and the true and felt Knowledge (not mere nominal

Knowledge) of the relations of Man and of the Universe to Him — being, I say, convinced that this knowledge, when felt and acted on, is the means of man's highest wellbeing, and the security of his upward progress,—I have therefore resolved to institute and found, in connection if possible with the Scottish universities, lectureships for the promotion of the study of the said subjects, and for the teaching and diffusion of sound views regarding them, among the whole population of Scotland." This implies that a man's final faith or final doubt shows what the man is, and makes him what he is.

Let us face facts fully and honestly.

It is with this deeply human purpose in view, and in the scientific spirit which seeks for truth, truth only, and truth all, that we now address ourselves to the ultimate question about the Universal Power, the answer to which constitutes "Natural Theology in the widest sense of the term." We are in quest of the wisest and truest answer, available for a being such as man is, to this supreme question—What is the *character* of the Universal Power with which all experience brings me into intercourse? Am I obliged in reason, by the facts and conditions of the case, to put finally a religious interpretation upon the universe; or do the facts forbid me to recognise any conception higher than the physical, called *par excellence* the "scientific"? Either way I must follow as facts and reason oblige me. "Things are what they are," as Bishop Butler says, "and the consequences of them will be what they will be; why, then, should we desire to be deceived?" Let us face the facts, seeking only to know what they are, and, as far as we can, what they mean. I will give the remainder of this lecture to some further consideration of the object-matter, method, and utility of Philosophical Theism, or "Natural Theology in the widest meaning of the term."

Recognition of the ultimate marvel of the

I. Look first at that in man which suggests the final human problem. The marvel of his own existence, and of the universe in which he finds himself, appears a marvel only to man among known sentient beings; and it

universe is characteristically human.

is this with full consciousness only to the few who reflect. "With the exception of man," as Schopenhauer says, "no being *wonders* at its own existence and surroundings." By the brute destitute of self-consciousness, the world and its own life are *felt*, uninquiringly felt, as a matter of course. But with man his own life and what it means becomes a thought at which even the most degraded may be moved to marvel. Men show themselves dimly conscious of this in the rudest forms of religion. A sense of the ever-abiding presence of the enigma of existence—shown in the form of wonder as to what we are, what our surroundings involve, why we are what we are, why so surrounded, and what we are destined to become at last—is the chief motive to philosophy. It is the awe involved in the vague sense of man's absolute dependence upon the Universal Power, amidst the Immensities and Eternities, and the sense of moral responsibility for the way we conduct our lives, that gives rise to religion.

A merely physical solution of the universal problem impossible.

The omnipresence of Infinite Reality gives their distinctive character alike to philosophy and to religion. It is by their concern with Infinite Reality that both are distinguished from finite physical science. We are accustomed in sciences of the material world to a feeling of satisfaction when we are able to refer unexpected events to visible causes, on which they are believed naturally to depend, according to the established natural order, and by which they are provisionally explained. But it is something deeper than desire for this provisional satisfaction that moves philosophical curiosity. For the complete or final meaning of the infinite universe of reality cannot be discovered by referring *it* to a natural cause, in the way material phenomena are referred to natural causes. Science of its Universal Power must be therefore absolutely unique science. The universe cannot be treated as if it were only a finite term in a natural succession. It is not like a visible event in one of the physical sciences, which, when a place has been found for it in the order of outward nature, ceases to perplex. In asking about the Character of the Power that accounts for the temporal procession, we are not trying to find a physical cause.

Philosophic wonder and religious reverence are states of mind which rise above physical science. To try to reach out beyond the natural evolution of the visible universe, and yet to treat the whole as only a finite effect in ordinary causal succession, seems to imply an experience of *universes;* but this surely involves a contradiction. For the universe of reality must be all-comprehensive; yet it seems as if I must get outside of it, and out of myself too as a part of it, in order to see its final meaning and purpose. It is only an infinitesimally small part of what happens in time that can be presented in each man's experience, or even in the experience of mankind. Omniscience is the only form of science for the final reality, one is ready to say.

David Hume's suggested difficulty about the Universe.

This invincible difficulty in dealing with the final problem, as a problem in physical science, perplexed David Hume, the most intrepid theological and philosophical thinker that Scotland has produced. For it seems to me that the dimension of the problem of "Natural Theology in the widest sense of the term" was realised by this Edinburgh citizen of last century as fully as by any preceding modern thinker, unless perhaps Spinoza. This is how David Hume makes Philo speak, as an interlocutor in "Dialogues on Natural Religion": "If we see a house," Philo argues, "we conclude with the greatest certainty that *it* had an architect or builder; because this is precisely the species of finite effect which we have experienced to proceed from that species of cause." Let me interpolate the remark that even in this conclusion Philo takes for granted, *without scientific proof,* that man *does* know enough about the universe in its ultimate principle to be certain that he is actually living in a universe in which like sorts of natural effects must proceed from like sorts of natural causes—that the procession of events must be always orderly, and therefore intelligible—that the universe, in short, must be *physically* trustworthy. Waiving this, however, Philo thus proceeds,—"Surely you will not affirm that the *universe* bears such a resemblance to a *house* that we can with the same certainty infer a cause for *it*, or that the analogy is here entire and perfect.

Can you think, Cleanthes, that your usual phlegm and philosophy have been preserved in so wide a step as you have taken, when you have compared the universe to houses, ships, furniture, machines; and from their similarity in some circumstances inferred a similarity in their causes? Thought, design, intelligence, such as we discover in men and other animals, is no more than *one* of the innumerable springs and principles in the universe, which as well as a hundred others, such as heat and cold, attraction and repulsion, fall under daily observation. It is a natural cause by which some particular parts of nature, we find, produce alterations on other parts. But can a conclusion with any propriety be transferred from [finite] parts to the [infinite] whole? Does not the great [infinite] disproportion bar all comparison or inference? . . . But, allowing that we are to take the operations of one part of nature upon another part, for the foundation of our judgment concerning the origin of the whole (which never can be admitted), yet why select so minute, so weak, so bounded a cause or principle as the reason and design of animals living upon this planet is found to be? What peculiar privilege has this little agitation of the brain which we call thought that we must thus make *it* the model of the whole universe? So far from admitting that the operations of a part can afford us any just conclusion concerning the [infinite] whole, I will not allow any one part to form a rule for another part, if the latter be very remote from the former. . . . And if *thought*, as we may well suppose, be confined merely to this narrow corner, and has even here so limited a sphere of action, with what propriety can we assign *it* for the original cause of all things? The narrow views of a peasant, who makes his domestic economy the rule for the government of kingdoms, is in comparison a pardonable sophism. But were we ever so much assured that a thought or reason, resembling the human, were to be found throughout the whole universe, and were *its* activity elsewhere vastly greater than it appears on this globe; yet I cannot see why the operations of a world *now* constituted, arranged, adjusted, can, with any propriety, be extended to a world

which was in its embryo state, and only advancing towards that constitution and arrangement. Nature, we find, from our limited experience, possesses an infinite number of springs and principles which incessantly discover themselves on every change in her position and situation. And what new and unknown principles would actuate her in so new and unknown a situation as that of the formation of a Universe, we cannot, without the utmost temerity, pretend to determine." So far David Hume.

The presence of evil and of death in the world intensify human interest in its final problem.

Notwithstanding this obstacle to our comprehension of the Character of the Universal Power, there are facts in experience that intensify the longing for some idea of what life in this evolving world in which we find ourselves practically means for us, and what it is finally to issue in. What probably quickens this desire, and rouses men out of the sensuous indifference produced by the mere custom of living, is, in the first place, the suffering and sin that seem to be chaotically mixed up with life on this planet; and, in the next place, the vanity that appears to be stamped upon each person's share in the whole transaction, through the fact that he is confronted by his approaching death. Evil and death are chief difficulties, moreover, in the way of a solution. If this embodied life of ours—in which, without being able to avoid it, we become individually, for a time at least, part of the universe—if this life were endless, and unmixed with sin and pain, the interest man could take in the ultimate problem would be speculative. The great enigma of Evil would not then disturb the divine harmony. Neither should we be confronted by the mystery of our own prospective disappearance from the scene—

> "To die—to sleep;—
> To sleep! perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
> For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
> When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
> Must give us pause."

Philosophy has been described as meditation upon death. It is an expansion of what the gentle and religious English essayist represented according to popular

The mystery of endless individual life.

conception in the "Vision of Mirza." But faith in their own immortality seems incredible to those who are accustomed to take the postulates of modern materialism alone for regulating their final interpretation of man. The world in which we are is found to be in constant change: all that is individual seems naturally transitory. Is it not contrary to the analogies of experience to suppose that I who lately began to live shall never cease to live—that I shall never be refunded into the unconscious existence from which I was evolved when I was born? Must not all that is generable be perishable? If I am immortal must not I have existed before my birth? And if my existence then noways concerns me now, as little need my existence after my death concern me now. Unconsciousness before the natural birth of our bodies suggests unconsciousness when the organisation naturally dissolves. What arguments can justify expectation of a sort of existence which can no way resemble what any living member of the human race has experienced? "When it is asked," says the sceptic, "whether Agamemnon, Thersites, Hannibal, Varro, and every stupid clown that ever existed, in Italy, Scythia, Bactria, or Guinea, is *now* alive,—can any man think that a scrutiny of nature will furnish arguments strong enough to answer so strange a question in the affirmative?" Moreover, how can endless personal existence be reconciled with a sense of personal identity; or with the faintest memory, in an infinite future, of the immortal person's immeasurable past? It is difficult for a grown man to identify himself with the new-born babe which he once was;—how is this difficulty increased when the person has become millions of years old? What practical identity can there be between myself now and myself a hundred millions of years hence? And, above all, what means a conscious life that is endless or infinite, thus transcending years and time? Is not an *infinite succession* of conscious states, or of events of any sort, impossible? At any rate, what scientific verification of a conclusion so stupendous is possible? Even the crucial instance of a man who has died and been restored to life telling his experience of what followed his death fails:

for he could not have had experience of *endlessness*. It is questions of this sort that the mystery of death is apt to suggest to those who assume that the physically scientific interpretation of the world must be its deepest interpretation.

Plato's allegory of the Cave illustrates our embodied life.

Man's position in relation to the final question which gives rise to philosophy, and which evokes religious faith and hope, suggests Plato's parable of the Cave. Which things are an allegory, for in them the philosophic Greek figures the contrast between the realities beyond, and the constant succession of changes within this transitory embodied life. So that, with respect to what really exists, men in this mortal state are not unlike those who are getting educated in a Cave; looking on the shadows of things, with their eyes turned away from the light which reveals the reality outside.

God and the immortality of man.

Man's interest in a settlement of his final problem is perhaps connected by Schopenhauer too exclusively with a vague desire for "some kind" of existence after physical death. "We find," he says, "that the interest which philosophies and religions inspire has always its strongest hold in the dogma of some kind of existence after death; and although the most recent systems seem to make the existence of God the main point, and defend this most zealously, yet in reality that is because they have connected their faith in a future life with God's existence, and regard the one as inseparable from the other. Only on account of this supposed future life is the existence of God important to man. For if one could sustain belief in one's own unending existence in some other way than by faith in God's existence, then zeal for the existence of God would cool; and if conversely the absolute impossibility of a future life for man were proved, theological zeal would give place to complete theological indifference. Also, if we could prove that our continued existence after death was absolutely inconsistent with the existence of God, men would soon sacrifice God to their own immortality, and become zealous for atheism, in order to retain their hope of a future life."

But does not all this proceed upon a wrong idea of

A universe without God.

what should be sought for, when we test the reasonableness of faith and hope in the Universal Power? Does it not involve a misconception of what ought to be meant by the word God? For a universe emptied of God is really a universe without meaning, law, or order; without reason, either omnipresent in it, or somehow supreme over it, and that is therefore even physically uninterpretable; without trustworthy active moral reason at the root of its therefore ultimately chaotic evolutions. It is a universe which may possibly be charged with purposeless future misery to men, and to all other sentient beings—misery infinitely transcending that which the most wretched have experienced in the past. It is a universe in which we must live without reasonable hope; and on the supposition that each person's life in it must be endless, it *may* become to all an endless hell, from which there is no escape into unconsciousness. Without perfect moral order and goodness personified at its centre, man would be in a worse condition than that of the sceptic whose thoughts are paraphrased by Pascal. "Who has sent me into this scene in which I now find myself, I know not," he proclaims in despair;—"what the true final meaning of my surroundings may be, I know not; what I really am myself, I know not. I am in a bewildering and terrifying ignorance of all things: I know not how to interpret any of the experience through which I pass. Encompassed by the fathomless and frightful abysses of Immensity and Eternity, I find myself chained to this one little corner of their boundless extent; without understanding why I am here rather than there, existing now rather than then; with unknowable Power all around, which may at any moment cause me to disappear like a shadow. The sum of my knowledge, after the utmost experience that I can have of the infinite universe in which I am living, is, that I must soon die: my highest wisdom seems to consist in nothing better than a fruitless meditation upon the mystery of my own death." Faith in the omnipresent supremacy of active moral Reason—faith in God—is the one unconditional human hope.

An insane universe.

It is told of Bishop Butler that one day in conversation with his friend Dean Tucker he put the question, Whether nations as well as individual men might not be liable to fits of insanity? "I thought little at the time of that odd conceit of the Bishop," the Dean remarks; "but I own I could not avoid thinking of it afterwards, and applying it to many cases of nations and their rulers." Butler's "odd conceit" may suggest a question not unlike his, with regard, not to nations only, but to the ever-changing Universe in which we are living and participating. May not the supposed cosmos, to a dim perception of which we all awake, be the manifestation of irrational, or even of infinitely cruel, Power? We have no guarantee against the virtual insanity of the Universe, when we lose moral reason in the Universal Power. Under such conditions, can we even justify the vulgar faith, which, in daily life and in the previsions and verifications of science, takes for granted, without proof, that man *is* living in an intelligible physical system, the events in which are fit to be reasoned about and converted into physical science? For it may then be that he is living in what may turn out at last a physical Chaos instead of a physical Cosmos? Order in the past is no security then for order in the future. May not the postulate of order in nature—natural law in things—be a mistake for what at last is purposeless unreason at the heart of the whole?

Absolute idealism and its aim.

Much philosophical and religious thought in the past is the issue of endeavours to find the best answers to questions like these. Reflecting men have been moved to inquiry because they wanted to find reasonable security that the supposed Cosmos was not finally Chaos—so that the world and human faculties might be trusted in. This is the dominant note of absolute Idealism, which in its own way seeks to *show* that experience is coherent in the organic unity of reason, so that no rightly exercised human being can be put to permanent confusion by irrationality in the Universal Power.

Questions which

Is moral faith in the Universal Power the highest philosophy, and, if so, what does this faith involve? Is it our

"Natural Theology in the widest meaning of the term" has got to consider.

most reasonable attitude, demanded by and sufficient for human nature in its true ideal? Is the immeasurable reality, in which I find myself living and moving and having my being, rooted in Active Moral Reason, and therefore absolutely worthy of trust; or is it hollow and hopeless, because at last without meaning, or even meaning ill? According to the answers to those questions, our surroundings and our future are viewed with an ineradicable hope, or with literally unutterable, because total, doubt and despair. It is those questions that "Natural Theology in the widest sense of the term" has to answer.

Our Method of procedure. What is meant by the "strictly natural" method of science?

II. Think next about the Method of procedure we are expected to follow when we are trying to find the answers. Lord Gifford's Deed of Foundation recommends one way of dealing with the final problem of existence, while it particularly warns us against another, as inconsistent with genuine inquiry and honest thought. The final problem of our Universe is to be disposed of, we are told, according to the "strictly natural" method of "science"; according to methods as "natural" as those adopted in the sciences of astronomy and chemistry, which are mentioned as examples. This is one instruction. The other is that we are to pursue the inquiry "without reference to, or reliance upon, any supposed special, exceptional, or so-called miraculous revelation."

Ambiguity.

Each of these conditions, so stated, seems to involve ambiguity.

Natural theology is not "natural" in the way merely physical sciences are.

In the first place, it seems, as I have already said, that this wholly unique science of the Universe cannot be a science of natural causes, in the same way as astronomy and chemistry are sciences of natural causes. For these two, and others like them, are sciences of portions of external nature; their facts receive the required explanation in inductively ascertained laws, in which the inferred cause is presentable in sense, and fit to be experimented on. But Infinite Being—the Final Principle of the universe—that in virtue of which the universe is a universe, and which keeps it a universe—*this* cannot be treated as only a portion of nature. For that would be to divest it

at the outset of its unique character—to reduce "Infinite Being" to the level of the finite phenomena in which the astronomer and the chemist see illustrations of natural law. Indeed this uniqueness is expressly presupposed in those words of the Foundation Deed, which speak of "Natural Theology in the widest sense of the term," as being properly "the *only* science"—"the *one universal* science"—thus contrasting it with special sciences of portions of nature, like astronomy and chemistry. Theology, as Aristotle saw, is truly that in which all philosophy culminates: for theology alone regards existence in its totality—if indeed the term totality may be applied to what is infinite. Theology is infinite in its scope: astronomy and chemistry concentrate themselves upon selected portions of what is finite.

The narrow and wide meanings of "nature" and "natural."

Therefore, when theology is (perhaps misleadingly) called "natural," and when Gifford lecturers are enjoined to treat this subject as "a strictly natural science," I am obliged to infer that the important adjective "natural" does not mean that Infinite Being, the object of study and inquiry, is to be included in nature—unless the ambiguous word "nature" is used in an all-comprehensive meaning, and not as a synonym for things and persons evolved in time. It is the visible phenomena within this system that natural sciences, such as astronomy and chemistry, are employed in seeking for and interpreting. In the narrower meaning of "nature" the "Infinite Being" of natural theology is *super*natural; and "natural" theology is concerned with what is supernatural or metaphysical. The implied analogy between the theology that is "natural," and sciences like astronomy and chemistry, must, therefore, mean something different from their being all concerned at last with natural causes.

Dogmatic assumption of the infallibility of Church or Bible disallowed.

I conclude, accordingly, that the intended meaning of "natural," in Lord Gifford's deed, is found more fully in the next injunction:—"I wish the lecturers to treat their subject . . . without reference to, or reliance upon, any supposed special, exceptional, or so-called miraculous revelation." That means, I suppose, that, just as "astronomy and chemistry"—the two named examples of

"natural" science—must be formed by methodical observation of events in nature, and freely formed inferences founded thereon—so, the theology which is "natural" must be determined by facts, and by principles of reason known to be true in their own light—not dogmatically assumed, on the infallible authority of a Church, or of books assumed to express infallibly the divine purpose. We know that there is no such dogmatically imposed authority for an infallible astronomy, or an infallible chemistry, which would supersede rational investigation. In like manner, blind reliance on supposed infallibility, biblical or traditional, in matters of religious thought, must be put aside by the Gifford lecturer; so that all the three sciences—the two physical ones now named, and the unique science of the Universal Power—must alike make their final appeal to reason in experience; not to traditional authority *per se*, which can never be the *final* court of appeal for a reasonable being, on any question, natural or supernatural. What is meant seems to be, that *reasonableness* must finally direct us, in this as in everything else, if we are reasonable beings.

But literary records of "divine inspirations" form part of the recorded experience of man.

So I do not interpret the terms of this Foundation as unphilosophically putting an arbitrary restraint upon reason, by withdrawing from our regard part of what is reported in the history of the world,—including those signal examples of religious experience, in Palestine and elsewhere, which claim to be the issue of what is called "supernatural interposition." The Church and the Bible present spiritual experiences about God, which *somehow* certain men have actually expressed in words or in ritual, and which (so far) are facts in the history of man. Whether natural or supernatural, in any of the several meanings of those ambiguous terms, this recorded experience is a portion of history. It is still the office of reason to judge under what conditions it is reasonable to accept recorded human experience as revelation of God, and also to interpret the words in which the experience is recorded. Whatever God has revealed is certainly true; we are obliged in reason to accept it, for in doing so we are accepting reason itself. But that

this or that which claims to be divine *is* divine cannot be assumed blindly: reason must judge whether it is reasonable so to accept it. Reason indeed can never permit us to reject a greater evidence in order to embrace what is less evident, nor allow us to entertain probability in opposition to absolute certainty. No evidence that any church or book is divine can be more clear and certain than are the universal and necessary principles of reason; and therefore nothing that is *demonstrably inconsistent* with what is reasonable has a right in reason to be received in faith. But whatever *is* divine revelation can claim assent in the name of final reason, which is itself the inspiration of God.

What is meant by "supernatural"?

One finds much need for Socratic questioning when the terms "natural" and "supernatural" are opposed to one another. What conception of "nature" is taken when theology is called "natural," and as such admitted to academical treatment, as philosophically queen among the sciences? Can there be a difference in kind between what happens naturally, and anything that is supposed to make its appearance supernaturally—in an ultimately reasonable universe? Must not all that can enter into the history of the planet and its inhabitants be regarded by the theist as natural—in the wide meaning of "nature"? and must not all possible events, whether called natural or supernatural, be consistent with the divine intellectual order? Nay, is not supernaturalness, in another view, the characteristic of man, so far as man is a moral agent, and to that extent independent of physical nature? Is not "miracle"—when the term is applied to a physical event—*e.g.*, the resurrection of a dead man—a relative term, dependent on the limitations of human experience and human intellectual grasp; so that, in proportion as man's intelligence and experience are widened, events called supernatural or miraculous would be seen by the eye of reason to take their places in the perfect order of God;—but at a point of view perhaps transcending the share of scientific knowledge in which a human intelligence can participate? In the view of perfect Intelligence can any event—say the resurrection of a dead man—be

miraculous, and not rather in natural conformity with omnipresent reason and purpose? Looked at from the *centre* of things, is it not true that either nothing should be called supernatural, or all should be called supernatural? A dim idea of this sort was perhaps in Bishop Butler's mind when he suggested that there can be no absurdity in supposing beings in the universe whose capacities and knowledge may be so extensive as that the whole Christian dispensation, commonly called supernatural or miraculous, may to them appear natural; as natural as the visible course of things appears to us. If all that happens, or can happen, in "nature" is the immediate issue and expression of omnipresent active reason, the distinction between natural and supernatural seems in the end to disappear; but not therefore the distinction between what is merely physical or sensuous and what is spiritual; nor is the rational possibility shut out of events by man for ever incalculable.

Is Faith a species of Reason?

Locke, according to Hume, was the first Christian who ventured openly to assert that *faith* was nothing but a species of *reason*, and that religion intellectually considered was a branch of philosophy. Omnipresent rational order, not irrational and capricious interference with rational order, must be presupposed at the foundation of all "revelations" of the character of the Universal Power, whether the revelations are called natural or supernatural. This is not inconsistent with the principle on which Goethe objected to Hegel, for transforming the Christian religion into philosophy, namely, that philosophy has really nothing to do with it; inasmuch as Christianity is sustained, not by philosophy, but by being found in experience to have *a might of its own*, by which dejected, suffering humanity is re-elevated from time to time. For in this, which after all is an argumentative appeal to experience, the spiritual efficiency of Christianity, proved by the consequences of its entrance into the world, is taken by reason as a justification of Christian faith.

III. Further, Lord Gifford's Deed gives a moral motive

for his encouragement of "Natural Theology" in its wide meaning. It was because he saw in true knowledge of God the means of man's highest welfare, and security for his upward progress; and also that this knowledge could be thus valuable only when it was reasonable conviction, "really felt and acted on," not merely speculation abstracted from human life and social regard. And I think it may be granted that the ultimate conception of life, in its relations to Omnipresent Power, which a man (consciously or unconsciously) acts under, is that which chiefly makes him what he is. Take some obvious illustrations. If a man fully accepts a final conception of the universe, which makes him only the passive subject of blindly necessitated natural evolution, morality and immorality become meaningless words, and Fatalism, as the logical, is also the practical issue. Again, our conduct and our judgments of human action must differ widely as the wholly material or the spiritual, the pessimist or the optimist, conception of existence, governs our lives. Also, unless we presuppose omnipresent Goodness in the universal evolution, we cannot justify any interpretation put upon events by science: it is all physical chaos, under a temporary semblance of cosmos; deceptive chaos, with a present pretence of order.

Illustrations of the dependence of human conduct upon our final interpretation of life.

It must surely be with a sense of weighty practical issues that we address ourselves to the consideration of the supreme problem which in faint outline I have now put before you. In the treatment of it, either of two objects may be prominent. It may be treated historically, as an investigation of the religions of the world in their natural evolution, in a historical science and psychological analysis of Religion; or it may be treated metaphysically, as an examination of the ultimate foundations of the religious conception of the universe, in a Philosophy of Theism. In Scotland both these courses were followed by David Hume. The one is exemplified in his 'Natural History of Religion,' a pioneer of that Science of Religion which is characteristic of the nineteenth century; the other is the subject of Hume's 'Dia-

The universal problem may be treated either historically or metaphysically.

logues concerning Natural Religion,' in which we are brought face to face with the metaphysical questions which underlie religion and all human experience.

Is the theological conception of the universe an anachronism and absurd?

Lecturers on the Gifford Foundation, in this and the other Scottish Universities, have hitherto, I think, inclined to the historical treatment of Religion. Deeply interesting as that is, it leaves in the background the supreme human question, especially in a sceptical age—the truth or validity of Religion in any of its developments. Can it be philosophically justified? Is it a permanent attitude of human nature, consistent with reason, if not the culmination of reason in man? Can truth in such matters, or if not in any matter, be either naturally or supernaturally reached by man? Is the religious conception of the universe a protracted illusion, characteristic of certain lower stages of human development, but an anachronism in a civilisation like that of modern Europe and America, which demands verified prevision under a physical or mechanical conception of the universe, as the only legitimate criterion of reality?

The metaphysical points of view prominent in this Course.

I propose to take the second of these two points of view, and so to deal metaphysically with the final human problem. This involves inquiry into foundations of the different final interpretations of existence — all religious, if religion means vague recognition by man of Power in the universe that is superior to his own—not all properly theistic. Philosophy of Theism, not Natural History of Religion, is our subject—yet with the history taken in occasionally, in illustration of the philosophy. The moral interest of the history lies in the validity and worth of the faith. Religion presupposes that human experience demands a deeper interpretation than that offered in the conceptions of natural science. Theistic faith claims for man an obligation in reason to recognise the universe as supremely or finally a moral and spiritual unity. Religious phenomena are insufficiently treated, when regarded only as transitory physical growth or evolution, the scientific ordering of which is taken for our whole intellectual concern with them. One still wants to be satisfied regarding their practical and their eternal validity. One wants

to find whether he is obedient to the inevitable limitations of human knowledge, when he ventures to put a religious meaning upon experience, and treats this as its most real meaning. Is filial faith in Omnipotent Goodness a reasonable state of the human mind, and even an indispensable moral postulate of human experience?

Aids to reflection on our final attitude towards the universe.

In what follows I will try to supply some incitement and direction to reflection upon our final attitude towards the universe, frankly facing difficulties that are apt to occur to thoughtful persons, always seeking to keep reality honestly in view, and satisfied to make the best of glimpses of reality that may be within our reach in this embodied life.

LECTURE II.

THREE PRIMARY DATA: EGO, MATTER, AND GOD.

Ultimate threefold articulation of the universe of existence.

THE ultimate problem of existence, in the vague form in which it was presented in last lecture, may seem to evade intellectual grasp. It must be further articulated before it can be taken hold of for orderly meditation and investigation. An advance towards this is made when we recognise that the infinite reality of which we are part, into which we are all born, and the meaning and purpose of which philosophy and religion are especially concerned with, presents three primary data. Each of these men seem to be obliged in some degree to recognise, but with innumerable differences in their individual conceptions. The three data make their appearance, in the very words of Lord Gifford's Deed which define the province of "Natural Theology, in the widest meaning of the term." For the words represent it as comprehending "knowledge of God's nature and attributes;" knowledge of "the relations of men to God;" and "knowledge of the relations which the whole universe bears to God." Here we have "men"—exemplified by each man for himself, in his own private consciousness; then the material world outside each conscious ego; and, for the final synthesis, "God" — Infinite or Universal Power.

The three primary data are differently conceived

But although these three data are commonly postulated as distinguishable existences, it is not to be supposed that "existence" — "substance" — "reality," and suchlike terms, are applied to each of the three in the same

meaning, by all men in all stages of their intellectual and spiritual development. All men do not think alike when they employ the personal pronoun "I,"—a pronoun so often uttered, yet withal so mysterious. Not less do they differ in their conceptions when they speak of the material world, as we find when they try to define the words "matter" and "external." Most of all does difference appear when they try to conceive "God." Each of the three ideas assumes different phases when it is traced throughout the history of man; and the variations are connected with the sort of experience that persons who employ the words pass through, and their power of interpreting it. Moreover, one of the three primary data is apt to be conceived as more entitled to have existence and substance and power affirmed of it than the other two. In the view of one, the Ego is so borne in upon him as to usurp the supreme place: the existence of things outside in space and the existence of God are taken as illusory, because reached only through acts of each private consciousness — there being no other consciousness than his own which a man can use. To another man, Matter, or what can be measured and moved, forms his final idea of reality, compared with which the Ego and God look shadowy. And in the mind of the "God-intoxicated" Spinoza, or of the religious mystic, Infinite Being seems to exhaust reality, and to absorb the other two data.

by different minds.

The mutual relations of the individual Ego, Matter, and God, form the principal part of Natural Theology, regarded as the Philosophy of Theism. Anterior to and independent of philosophy, a tacit faith in the ego, in external things, and in God, seems to pervade human experience; mixing, often unconsciously, with the lives of all; never perfectly defined, but in its fundamental ideas more or less operative; often intellectually confused, yet never without a threefold influence in human life. We may even say that unbalanced recognition of one of the three over the other two, in thought, feeling, and action, is the chief source of intellectual error and moral disorder; add that life is good and

Consequences of any one of the three being over-emphasised.

happy in proportion to the due acknowledgment of all the three. Confused conceptions of the three are an inexhaustible source of two extremes—superstition and scepticism.

The three primary data as articulated by Locke.

Take Locke's account of the foundation of certainty as to the Ego, Matter, and God. It is given expressly in three chapters of the fourth book of his 'Essay': but, indeed, the whole 'Essay' converges and rests in the end upon what Locke calls "man's threefold knowledge of existence." I choose Locke among philosophers for this purpose, because he gives expression more than most of them to the uncriticised convictions of the common mind; and before natural science and theological ideas were modified, either by the conception of universal physical evolution, or by the philosophical criticism of Kant and the dialectic of Hegel. I want to present Locke's homely articulation of the ultimate problem of the universe, as a preparation for the consideration of more pretentious philosophical speculations, which try to resolve the three primary data into one. He puts the case in the ninth chapter of the fourth book of the 'Essay,' and by implication in the twenty-third chapter of the second book.

How the presupposition of our own existence arises.

In Locke's view, the most obvious of the three final certainties is Ego—the assurance one has of his own existence. This arises when he recognises *himself* to be somehow more than a succession of conscious states—as the invisible personal centre to which alone a portion of the conscious experience that is in process in the universe must be referred, as being his own private and continuous conscious life. "As for our own existence," he says, "we perceive it so plainly and so certainly that it neither needs nor is capable of any proof. For nothing can be more evident to me than *my own existence*. I think, I reason, I feel pleasure and pain: can any of these states be more evident to me than my own existence? If I doubt of all other things, that very doubt makes me perceive my own existence. Experience

then convinces us that we have an intuitive knowledge of our own existence, an internal, infallible perception that we are." (Bk. iv. ch. ix.)

The datum of my separate personality, or Ego.

In this postulate Locke is giving expression to the uncriticised conviction of the human mind. Enigmas that underlie the datum are left to the speculating philosopher to disinter. They emerge when we proceed to rake Locke's foundation. For further reflection is provoked to ask,—What is meant by one's existence as a separate person,—that *something more* than a series of isolated conscious states, which is supposed to be signified by the pronoun "I"? This is the riddle of personality. The personal pronoun, in so far as it means this "something more," means something that cannot be perceived by the senses or pictured. Must it therefore be discharged from language, as empty sound? This is the way the personal pronoun has been sometimes treated. David Hume, for example, dismissed all terms as jargon to which no imagination could be attached; and on this principle he virtually dispensed with the personal pronoun "I." For, after trying the experiment, he said he could never light upon anything perceptible or imaginable, corresponding to "I"—only isolated and transitory conscious states; so he concluded that if any one pretended to think that the Ego was something more than the single perception or feeling of the moment, it was "impossible to reason with him." If any one perceives something simple and continued which he calls "himself," I am certain, he asserts, that there is no such perception of continuous existence in me. But this negative certainty of Hume is confronted by the difficulty, that if the personal pronoun signifies nothing more than isolated momentary perceptions, there must be as many persons or egos as there are momentary perceptions; each momentary perception, in what is commonly called one's "mind," constituting a separate person, whose personal life lasts only as long as the momentary consciousness lasts. It is further confronted by the fact that the mysterious *ego* inevitably reappears by implication in the words and actions even of the sceptical philosopher, who is thus obliged in fact to acknowledge as

real more than can be presented in sense or pictured in sensuous imagination.

Enigmas involved in the idea of our own individual existence.

There are other enigmas involved in our own existence that lie more on the surface than the one now suggested. The origin, gradual evolution, and final destiny of the invisible and continuous Ego; the relations of the Ego of which we are conscious to its visible organism; the need and nature of its connection with Matter, — are among the questions suggested by the meaning of the personal pronoun which modern thought presses upon us. Locke is satisfied with giving emphatic expression to his spontaneous conviction of his own existence. *Si non rogas, intelligo.*

The belief that movable things and individual persons exist outside me.

He deals more analytically with perception of things present to the senses—the second of the three primary data. Contact and collision with outward things is found to be the occasion, if not the origin, of our awaking into an irresistible conviction of our personality. For that conviction involves a perception of something outside each ego, to which the personal states are found related. Every act of sensuous perception "gives us," Locke says, "an equal view of both parts of Nature—the corporeal and the spiritual. Whilst I know, by seeing and hearing, that there is some corporeal being *without me*,—the object of that sensation, I do more certainly know also that there is some spiritual being *within me* that sees and hears that object." So he finds that the human ego becomes simultaneously possessed of this "irresistible assurance" of the outside existence of things visible and tangible; things which cannot be appropriated by the ego as states of itself, in the way that its own past and present feelings and thoughts are appropriated. But it is important to remark that it is a portion of "outward existence" very limited in extent and duration, which is supposed by Locke to be perceived, without need or possibility of proof—over and above the spontaneity of the sensuous perception itself, and the certainty which this spontaneity is taken to involve. The object spontaneously perceived is limited, because the world of "outward things" is in constant change. And the fluctuating objects are felt to be certainly real

only (so Locke assumes) during the moment in which each outward thing, "by actually operating upon our senses," in a manner *forces us to perceive it* then and there existing. Accordingly, when an outward object is withdrawn to a distance from one's organs of sense, or separated by an interval of time, Locke assumes that one has no absolute certainty of its still *continued* existence. Its absent existence, at least in the form it had when it was present, can only be inferred, and with a probability varied according to circumstances. When one is *looking* at the sun, he must have perfect assurance that the sun is *then* really existing: this is the spontaneous certainty of immediate perception. But when at night he is only expecting its reappearance in the morning, this *expectation* is nothing more than probable conviction of the continued existence of the absent sun: the solar system, Locke would say, might conceivably be dissolved before morning; and there is no unconditional guarantee that this may not actually happen.

Enigmas involved in perception of things existing outwardly.

Innumerable enigmas underlie Locke's infallibly certain sensuous perception of outward things — enigmas scarcely apprehended by him, especially in the forms in which they now appear in scientific and religious thought. Take an example. He tells us that we have an "irresistible assurance" of the present corporeal reality of all things that are "actually operating" upon "our senses" —especially upon the senses of sight and touch—as long as they persist in "actually operating" upon those senses. Here a question of far-reaching significance arises, which Locke touches only incidentally. In what meaning of the ambiguous words "power," "operation," and "cause," may any things of sense be said to *operate* either on one another or on me? Have I reason for supposing that an atom or a mass of atoms can be rightly called an *agent;* although in common and also in scientific language bodies are so spoken of—nay, are even supposed by materialists to be the *only* agents in the changes constantly going on in the universe? Locke at any rate hesitates to include "active power" in the complex idea we are justified in forming of *material* substance; although he falls into the

popular mode of expression; for he occasionally speaks of *bodies* "operating." "But," he suggests, with characteristic caution, in the part of the 'Essay' where the "powers of substances" are expressly treated of, that "material substances are not so entirely active powers or agents as our hasty thoughts are apt to represent them." Indeed, "whether matter be not wholly destitute of active power may be worth consideration." But, if that be so, the solid movable things by which we are surrounded can be only the natural occasions, not the origin, of our perceptions of them. He begins to see that we must look elsewhere than to things visible and tangible for the power that directs the changes which the natural sciences are gradually learning to explain. It is only established order of procedure in external nature, not causation proper, that those sciences are concerned with. Natural science is only articulate application of our faith that in nature the future will so resemble the past that we, through the past, may, with practical safety, to some extent forecast the future. But our interpretations are often mistaken, when tested by the issue; and even in those cases in which they are verified by experiment, it is only probable verification, not unconditional certainty, that one is landed in. The concrete past can never make the concrete future known, in the way abstract premisses make known an abstract conclusion in a mathematical demonstration. We do not know all the powers which determine changes, or the possible action of the Universal Power. Accordingly, we cannot be said to *know unconditionally* even that the sun will rise to-morrow. An "accident," as in our ignorance we might call it, may occur to the solar system in the interval, so that there may be no "to-morrow" in the ordinary meaning. All physical "science" of outward things is sustained at last in undemonstrable faith.

Duality of the Ego and Matter.

Nevertheless—with mysteries like these wrapped up in the two data—this duality of conscious person and unconscious thing are tacitly assumed, but by most persons in a *si non rogas, intelligo* state of mind. So one may say that he has natural assurance of his own existence, as a

separate self-conscious ego; and also natural assurance of the existence of things outside as long as they are present to his senses. He finds when he acts that he cannot rid himself of either of these, as working convictions, and he finds that each is the correlative of the other.

Still this dual universe in which I find myself is recognised as *incomplete*, when one thinks of it as consisting *only* of the ego and the outside world—the occasion to the ego of innumerable pains and pleasures. Locke expresses the common feeling of this incompleteness, dim in many, when he finds himself unable to think of his own existence without also recognising the existence of "Something Eternal or Infinite"—more and other than the ego—more and other than the outer world of things. He finds himself as certain of the reality of this Eternal Something—as certain too that this Eternal Something must be Eternal Mind—as he is certain of any conclusion in mathematics. He finds himself even surer that an Eternal Mind exists than he is that anything else "outside of himself" exists; and he believes that every other human being who makes the trial must find that this is so. "It is as certain in reason," he says, "that there is a God as it is certain that the opposite angles made by the intersection of two straight lines are equal, or as that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles." Yet while the existence of the Universal Power, the supreme factor of experience, becomes conscious certainty in all who reflect, the certainty, Locke grants, needs reflection to awaken it. Without due reflection a man may remain as ignorant of Divine Reality as a stranger to geometry may remain ignorant of the demonstrations, and even the axioms, of Euclid, although they lie latent in the minds of all. In like manner, many persons never recognise necessity in experience for the existence of Divine Mind. But it must be remembered that the other two data—our own existence, and that of outside things—are also only obscurely recognised, although all acknowledge them, in feeling and action.

Finite duality, and the presupposition of Something Infinite.

Now how does conviction of the existence of Eternal Mind first enter a human mind? God cannot, of course,

Locke's account of

how we come to infer Eternal Mind.

be presented to our senses; nor, indeed, can any other ego than my own be present to me, in the way the invisible ego is. Here is Locke's answer:—"I cannot want a clear proof that God exists, as long as I carry *myself* about with me. For each man knows that he individually exists;" and he also knows "that *he* has not existed always. It is therefore inevitable to him, as a rational being, to conclude that Something must have existed from eternity, . . . this being of all absurdities the greatest in the eye of reason—to imagine that pure Nothing, the perfect negation and absence of all beings, should ever produce any real existence. I cannot myself be this Eternal Something, seeing that my own existence, as I know, had a beginning; and whatever had a beginning must have been produced by something else; and it must have got all that belongs to its existence from that other being. Further, I find that I am a thinking being: therefore this Something, the original source of my existence, must be a thinking being too;—it being as impossible that what is wholly void of knowledge, and operating blindly and without any perception, should produce a knowing being, such as I am, as it is impossible that a triangle should make itself three angles bigger than two right ones." This argument, afterwards elaborated by Samuel Clarke, is in substance as old as Aristotle.

Can the Eternal Power be regarded as self-conscious Mind?

Nevertheless, Eternal "Mind," when recognised by Locke as the translation of the Eternal Something, is this with an important qualification. Am I permitted by reason to think of the Eternal Something as "Mind," such as I find conscious in myself? Is the Eternal Mind conscious mind, or is the term "consciousness" applicable to the Eternal Power? Are we obliged to suppose in what is called God an individual conscious life, in which subject and object are distinguished as in human consciousness? May we think of Eternal Mind as a separate conscious life, continually passing through conscious changes? and if so, what is the ground in reason for so thinking? How do we know that the Eternal Power is an operative conscious life, and so eternally? As to this Locke shows characteristic caution. The Eternal

Something, he suggests, may be thought about as Eternal Mind, because it is practically related to me, in my experience of my surroundings, in the way one person is related to another person. But he adds, "though for this reason I call it mind, I must not"—because I thus apply this *name* to the Eternal Something, in common with myself—"I must not equal what I call mind in myself to the Eternal and Incomprehensible Being, which, for want of right and distinct conceptions, is also called Mind, or the Eternal Mind." This suggests the mystery of "mind" as supposed in the Universal Power.

Enigmas involved in the third belief.

The words I have quoted—"the Being which, for want of right and distinct conceptions, I call the Eternal Mind"—show a sense of the mystery involved in all human ideas of God. They touch the question which is at the root of the theological embarrassment of the present day—What does the word "God" mean? And as to Locke's "mathematically certain" proof of the existence of "Eternal Mind," it may well be considered inadequate. To conclude that there must be Mind Eternal or Infinite, because I am now conscious, and only lately began to be conscious, is surely an example of circular reasoning, in which the stupendous conclusion is presupposed in order to be proved. "My own existence" means the existence of a finite being; and unless infinity is presupposed in the premisses the conclusion fails. Infinite Being cannot be concluded from one finite being: God is not logically involved in *me*. When I take data of experience—in this case my own short-lived existence—as the sole datum, this finite event only cannot yield Infinite Being in the conclusion. Finite data yield only finite conclusions, not, without limit or condition, the infinite God. And a finite god only sends the craving for a cause in quest of something deeper. A finite god leaves unsatisfied the religious sense of absolute security, and the demand for an unconditioned basis for science and human life. If the word God must mean, the Being whose existence necessarily forecloses ulterior inquiry as to the cause of Divine existence, the word in that case cannot be applied to any being whose existence is inferred from

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finite facts only; and which, as finite, raises anew, instead of finally foreclosing, the previous question, as to the cause of *its* existence. The supposed gods of polytheism are finite;—therefore dependent, and unfit to satisfy the need for absolute support, or to meet man's sense of incompleteness in all that is finite. The essence of the meaning of the word God is necessarily wanting in them. When "God" is taken to be a conclusion from the world, instead of a presupposition involved in all reasonable interpretation of the world, the term is then used in an untheistic meaning; and, so far as this applies to polytheistic religions, *they* are in this respect untheistic. We must not take the operation of one finite being upon another finite being as analogy for forming an infinite conclusion. God is not to be thought of as one among innumerable individuals, material and spiritual, which make up the universe, but as One in whom all have their individual being—One incomprehensible under genus or species—absolutely unique—incapable of being classed.

Morality, physical science, and religion.

The three primary data of reality are severally the occasions of morality, science, and religion. My own existence, implied in the recognition of my continuous personality, and in the power which I refer to myself, when I acknowledge personal responsibility, calls forth ideals of duty to man and God, and affords material for moral judgments. External nature, at least as presented in our sensuous experience, is non-moral: yet without the medium supplied by external things as signs, I seem to have no means of discovering the existence of other persons; still less of receiving from them, or communicating to them ideas: so that, but for a material world, there would be no room for that exercise and development of intelligence which interpretation of visible nature requires, and on which individual and social progress depend: the material world, non-moral in itself, is a medium of social intercourse, and also a medium through which persons are individualised and morally educated. Then, too, without faith and hope in the Universal Power,

on which the universe of change is presumed to depend, and on which we repose, as our basis for thought and action, both morality and natural science must be paralysed. In this divine faith religion is rooted; so that secular morality and natural science become at last religious. Trust in natural law is faith in God in germ.

Examples of misconceptions regarding the three primary data.

Superstition and scepticism are extremes into which men are led, by not preserving the balance between the three primary data of reality. While no one of the three can be wholly explained away, consistently with sane human life, any of them may be so exaggerated as to distort the final conception of life and the universe. Take examples. At certain stages in man's religious and intellectual development, there is a disposition to see God only in what is uncommon, unexpected, abnormal; and to refer to what are called "natural agents," events that are customary. According to this assumption, whatever is found to evolve or grow—evolution is another name for growth—gradually and regularly, is referred wholly to a supposed "power" in "nature," which power means only the constant natural method through which the issue is reached: God is recognised only when something happens which seems *not* to appear gradually or under natural law. So the realm of natural operation, and the realm in which God is supposed to operate come to be regarded as each excluding the other; with the result in an unconscious polytheism, which makes one god of "nature" and another god of "supernature." It follows that all scientific discoveries of natural causes or natural processes are supposed to exclude God more and more as the constant agent in the universe. God is seen acting only in what science cannot naturally bridge over; and these vacant intervals of course become fewer and fewer with the advance of science. The need for a religious interpretation of what happens in the universe seems to diminish with each step onward in natural interpretation: the idea of the universe as in itself throughout finally interpretable *only* physically, and therefore foreclosing an ulterior theological conception, in the end takes the place of the religious idea of the whole. The advance of science

becomes the paralysis of religious thought, because the system of nature leaves no room for that arbitrary violation of rational order in which superstition and confused theological thinking find the sign of the providential presence of God. When superstition is not permitted by science to retain an irregular and capricious universe of this sort, its deity and its religion disappear. The modern appreciation of natural causes, after dissolving the personifications of polytheism, is now destroying their relics in inadequately conceived theism.

The conjecture that God may be found elsewhere, although not on this planet.

This conception of God, as mechanical and local and external, appears at the bottom of theological appeals against the presumption of the atheist, who dares to conclude that God does not exist, merely because neither our eyes nor our telescopes reveal His presence—within the comparatively narrow and always finite space to which our senses, even when artificially assisted, and our imagination give positive access. If not found *here*, a God may possibly be found *there;* if not the cause of *this* which comes within our experience, a God may possibly be the cause of *something elsewhere* that man cannot see. If man does not know *every* agent in the wide expanse of the universe, the agent that he is ignorant of may be God. If he cannot assign the causes of all that he perceives to exist, the unperceived cause of that unknown remainder may be God. If he does not know how everything has been done in past ages, some of those doings may have been the doings of God. In short, unless I preclude the possible existence of another god by being omniscient or a god myself, I cannot know for certain that the God whose existence I deny may not exist *somewhere.* Now a god that can be locally and potentially present, here, but not there, in this event, but not in that event; or that might be detected by a telescope in some remote part of space, if a powerful enough telescope could be invented; or detected only in extraordinary events,—spoken of too as "*a* God"—is surely not the Unique Divine Reality, "in which we all live and move and have our being"; presupposed tacitly in all perception and self-consciousness, or else everywhere and for ever out of relation to

human life. God, as Bacon says, does not need to work physical miracles in order to refute atheists. If the whole natural course of things does not presuppose God, as the condition of its being even physically interpretable, no extraordinary local manifestations in nature can in themselves supply the proof. With the presupposition granted of Divine Reason latent in the heart of existence, some events in the history of the universe may doubtless be more fitted than others to evoke into fuller intelligence the corresponding moral trust and adoration that are latent in man; but without the tacit postulate of God in all perception and consciousness, this fuller or richer intelligence of Deity, otherwise evolved by enlarged experience, finds no adequate foundation.

Or might have been found long ago, although not now.

Again. Is it not also an inadequate and inconsequent theism that is left to depend finally upon historical proof that the cosmical economy of our little planet, or even of the solar system, had no natural beginning; because under the conception of natural beginning there could be no reason, it is assumed, for the supposition of "a God"? If the economy of the present solar system must first be proved by historic records to have been formed unnaturally —according to the common expression, by a sudden creative act—before faith in God can be justified, the basis seems too narrow and too precarious to support the conclusion. It is not enough to argue for Eternal Mind, as some have done, on the ground that it can be proved by the book of Genesis that the visible world originated in God, but that there is no historical proof that the God in whom it originated Himself had a beginning. If we thus make history settle questions which lie beyond its sphere, what is the difference in this respect between the solar system and the causally dependent "God" its historical origin is supposed to prove? They are both treated in these arguments as caused causes. "A mental world, or universe of ideas," as Hume suggests, "requires a cause, as much as does a material world or universe of objects. In an abstract view, they are entirely alike; and no difficulty attends the one supposition which is not common to both of them." Is it not only after the ultimate divineness of

all natural processes has been presupposed that any experience is found to enlarge and illustrate our conception of God?

Panmaterialism, Panegoism, and Pantheism.

So much in illustration of perplexities in which thought becomes involved under crude conceptions of the three fundamental data and their mutual relations. The difficulty of reconciling these three existences with one another, along with the desire for undifferentiated unity awakened in speculating intelligence, leads to Monist theories which profess to resolve all that exists into *One* of the three. The theories differ according as this or that datum obtains exaggerated, and in the end exclusive, recognition. Thus the material world, which fills the horizon of sense, is taken for the single reality, in a final conception which makes the universe at last only a universe of molecules in motion. This is Panmaterialism, which fancies that it finds in Matter what common conviction refers to the Ego or to God. On the other hand, those in whom the introspective habit is strong are apt to interpret All as ultimately modified Ego, in a theory of Panegoism or Solipsism. Lastly, dissatisfaction with a universe of only finite beings, combined either with reasoned or with mystical aspiration after Infinite Reality, disposes the courageous thinker, or the pious mystic, to seek for the One, neither in outward things with the Panmaterialist, nor in the Ego with the Panegoist, but in God.

Is any of these speculations a resting-place for man, as a moral and spiritual being?

I will now endeavour to occupy each of these three Monist points of view in succession; to try whether any of them affords the ultimate conception needed by man in his spiritual integrity. Are men under intellectual obligation to accept any of them, as the final interpretation of all that exists, and if so, which of them is thus obligatory? If supreme regard for reasonableness obliges us to dismiss them all, what alternatives are open? Must we abandon the universal problem, as one which does not admit even of a working human solution; our final relation to it being the negative knowledge, that the

whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery;—so that at last no judgment formed about anything can be regarded as more certain than its contradictory? Is total scepticism the issue of the final rejection, as unreal, of any one of the three data, and of attempts to explain man's life in the universe in terms of one only of the three? These are questions which we have now to meet. I will begin by asking you to look at existence as the materialist may be supposed to look at it, and inquire whether Universal Materialism is a coherent conception, and the only human solution of the Whole.

FIRST PART

UNTHEISTIC SPECULATION AND FINAL SCEPTICISM

LECTURE I.

UNIVERSAL MATERIALISM.

Early Hellenic attempts to finally interpret the universe.

In the infancy of philosophical speculation, as in the early years of each man's life, it is the world of solid and extended things — what can be seen and moved — that is apt to be regarded as the one only reality, and as what alone is entitled to be called a Cause. So it was that in the age before Socrates, among the early Hellenic inquirers, the mystery in which we find ourselves enveloped when we look before and after seemed to be relieved, as soon as some element in matter could be detected, out of which it might plausibly be conjectured that all originally issued. They were satisfied when they thought that they could answer the final question about man and the universe, by resolving the Whole into some sort of visible substance—water, air, or fire—as primary material. The totality of existence was finally identified with matter; but without analysis of what matter ultimately means, or even a distinct conception of outwardness in relation to self-conscious mind. The objects of sense were tacitly credited with powers which seemed to subordinate the other two of the three primary data. It was among things that appeal to the senses that Thales, Anaximander, and other contemporaries sought satisfaction, when their crude experience gave rise to their philosophic wonder. This pre-Socratic materialism, latent in the universal flux of Heraclitus, developed in the atomism of Democritus, was idealised, and may be seen at its best, in the magnificent poem of Lucretius.

Materialism in the nineteenth century.

Our own nineteenth century finds millions trying to get satisfaction in the same way; still turning for explanation to what sense presents, when they are confronted by the mystery of their own life in the universe; or when their desire for intellectual unity rebels against three final existences, and strives to reduce all plurality to One. Modern materialism, recognising the innumerable useful secrets which the material world holds within it, and which modern science is disclosing to the increase of our knowledge and comfort—in gratitude for what Matter is apparently doing for us all—is ready to fall down and worship its benefactor, and to lose Man and God in the immensity of outward things and their eternal evolution. For science of outward things, after three centuries of successful experimental intercourse with the world that is presented to the senses, has much to say for itself. It is able to say that it has gradually succeeded, with universal consent, in interpreting many things that surround us in space, solid and extended; one kind of thing that we see being said to explain another kind of thing that can also be seen; and it is ready to contrast the consent in physical interpretation with the perplexities which metaphysical interpretation of the universe is said to involve. So trust is put at last only on what is outward and that can be verified by physical experiment. What can be so made good, one is ready to say, is bound to carry it over theological dreams, which are all that we possess when we pretend to something superior to sense. I seem to be the sport of illusion whenever I forsake this safe sphere, the naturalist inquirer insists: what I see I can also touch; what I touch I can make experiments upon; I can repeat the experiments in new circumstances, and then compare at my leisure the issues of various calculated experiments. In this way I find that I can foresee physical issues, and anticipate the natural behaviour of things. For these and other reasons I am certain that in the data of the senses I have got hold of existence on its only real side. I find that I can use tangible and visible experience as the one undoubted test for inter-

preting whatever happens that is interpretable. While I keep on this path I can walk with a firm intellectual step, and can stake my life on the certainty of my inferences. Such is the voice of modern science of external nature in evolution, when translated into Universal Materialism. It leads back to what, in naïve and confused fashion, was the assumption of Hellenic cosmologists in the infancy of philosophical questioning. It is supposed to demonstrate the insignificance of man in nature, and therefore the baselessness and unintelligibility of "the theistic hypothesis," when it pretends to be the last word about the Whole. For dogmatic atheism, or at least theological agnosticism, is the inevitable philosophy of those who confine experience to external sense, disallowing any other experience, or any principle of harmony deeper than customary succession of sense appearances.

The anthropocentric conception of the universe in Hebrew and Hellenic literature.

It was not always thus in the long interval which separates Thales and Democritus from the nineteenth century. A teleological conception of existence that might even be called *anthropocentric*, or man-centred, instead of the earlier or the later materialism, pervades in a striking fashion ancient Hebrew literature, as we have it in Genesis and other books; intensified into a spiritual anthropomorphism in the Jewish psalmists and prophets, with their deep intuition of the moral relation of man to their vividly conceived personal God. Unique as were the Jews in this respect, a teleological, if not an anthropocentric, conception of the universe is not exclusively Hebraic, even in the ancient world. Among the Greeks there was a faint recognition by Anaxagoras of active Reason as the supreme cosmic principle, superior to blind necessities of molecular motion, and apt to suggest a religious conception of the relations of the Whole. By an emphatic acknowledgment of Man rather than outward things as the primary object of human interest—the moral agent, not the starry heavens — Socrates recalled his followers from exaggerated regard for outward things; he also directed reflection to ends latent in reason, and connected with man as the chief end. In

Greece Socratic reaction was inspired by the genius of Plato, and more articulately through the systematic intelligence of Aristotle; while among the Romans the natural theology of Cicero, based on a theological idea of the world, sometimes finds vent in language that might be called anthropomorphic.

Above all in Christianity.

But it was the profound spirituality of Christianity, occasionally exaggerated among Christians, that reduced material things to insignificance, as compared with persons, in the elaborate theology or philosophy of the ages of faith. The conception of the supremeness of man in the cosmos found a scientific auxiliary in the accepted Ptolemaic astronomy, with its *geocentric* conception of the material universe, in which all falls into subordinate relation to a man-inhabited Earth. The destiny of man thus came to be regarded as even the final and eternal purpose of the universe; and it was assumed, in harmony with this, that the Universal Power must be a living Spirit, analogous to the spirit found incarnate in man.

Anthropocentric conceptions in Medievalism.

A narrow anthropocentric conception of the Supreme Principle of the universe culminated in the middle age of European thought. Monastic separation from the visible world; absolute separation between what was abstracted as secular, and what was abstracted as spiritual, or between state and church; opposition between nature on the one side, and supernatural power on the other, were among its symptoms. It produced indifference to physical order and to science of nature; warfare with those who would rule their lives by the physical idea of law; an endeavour to live only in consciousness of supernatural environment; man at the centre of space, seeing the infinite eternal economy all directed to his own spiritual government—man's welfare supposed to be marred by acknowledgment of spirituality in secular life. Religion, under this ascetic form of religious thought, took the place in medievalism that is now claimed for sciences of outward nature. The atomism of Lucretius was exchanged for the subtle Christian theology of Aquinas, the curious conceits of the 'Divina Com-

media,' afterwards in the mythology of Milton, and the human analogies of Puritan divines.

Local insignificance of Man.

Man's imagined local supremacy under the Ptolemaic astronomy encouraged this theological conception of human life. A scientific revolution in men's ideas of their place in the material universe, which seemed to reduce man to his discovered local insignificance, and invited us to think of ourselves as the transitory issue of a natural process, appeared inconsistent with the supremacy of the religious idea, and an invitation to the atomistic and mechanical one to resume its old final place. The postulate that God is at the root of the Whole seemed somehow bound up with a now exploded uniqueness in the local position of man's earthly home in the material world.

Bacon and Spinoza on the teleological conception of the universe.

So modern free search among the natural causes perceptible by the senses has been changing the old anthropocentric ideas — under the scientific assumption that causation is only regular sequence, open to experimental detection, and more or less subject to human control. This assumption accustomed the mind to physical utilities, and a narrow teleological conception seemed barren by contrast. The change finds voice in what Bacon and Spinoza say about the fruitfulness of natural causes, as compared with the inutility of final causes. It is as the visible means according to which human purposes may be carried out by men, as ministers of nature, that Bacon sets a high value on material or caused causes, and on the science which discloses them: in a final cause he found nothing which man could employ as his instrument, or of which he could be the interpreter. Final causes look unpractical: the inscrutable will and purpose of a distant God becomes an asylum for indolent neglect of the useful natural causes which surround us; or a shelter for superstition, withdrawing men from experimental inquiry into the texture of the web of nature in which we are involved. So Spinoza argues against anthropomorphism. In this he exceeds Bacon, who complains only of the abuse of final causes, when they make us neglect the causes that appeal to our senses, and

that can be adapted to human purposes in this embodied life; but allowing for their value in other aspects. Not so Spinoza, who insists that reason teaches men the futility of the very idea of a final cause in which man is the end; and argues that until men are satisfied that law in nature is not intended for *their* satisfaction, they are not likely to be convinced that reality must be measured by disinterested scientific evidence. Nothing, he says, should be concluded true or false, because it is or is not in harmony with human interests; and it is a profound mistake to call things or events good or bad, because they happen to be agreeable or repugnant to a being so insignificant as man. On the other hand, Bacon, while he presses the need for engaging in the long-neglected search for the causes that may be found by experiment within the visible succession of nature—seeing that we may usefully employ *such* causes when we discover them—argues also that experimental search among physical phenomena may even confirm and exalt our recognition of divine purpose. For inductive inquiry into natural causes, which are the required conditions of all changes that go on around us, so far from dissolving faith in a dominant providence, only shows that full human satisfaction is not attained without discernment of divine providence animating the natural evolution.

Modern reaction against the anthropocentric conception.

The centuries since Bacon and Spinoza have witnessed an increasing reaction against all forms of theological anthropomorphism, in the interest of a secularly fruitful search for operations of natural causes, visible and tangible, under laws which interpret our bodily surroundings, and our bodies besides—laws which may be applied by men as means for making this a more comfortable planetary abode. Thus the vast material world, as containing the only visible agents of desirable changes, has come to fill the popular imagination: that small portion of matter which is appropriated by each person as specially his body is reduced to relative insignificance. The merely physical interpretation of external nature, with its tacitly supposed, but undemonstrated, faith in constant physical order, is next assumed to be the only legitimate sort of science,

and to open the only way in which reason can permit us to walk. Appeals to other constituents of the faith out of which reason in man spontaneously rises, and into which, in a more developed condition, it is found at last to return, are disparaged, as appeals only to feeling, imagination, or dogmatic authority, not to reason; which must, it seems, be always something physically natural. Shall we, then, surrender ourselves to the influence of this intellectual atmosphere, and adopt the materialistic conception of the universe of existence, as ultimately only molecules in motion? Much appears to recommend the conception to the obedient disciple of fact and reason when he comes with those presuppositions; and then he presses the conclusion, that the only available solution of the problem of his life is to be found at a point of view at which the invisible Ego and the invisible God disappear, as superfluous postulates, added by unscientific imagination to the one solid fact—a universe of molecules in motion.

The reaction sustained by astronomical discovery and speculation.

A change in the astronomical conceptions of men led the way in this modern revolution. Copernican astronomy gradually dissolved the old Ptolemaic idea that man's abode was the centre of the material world—the starry hosts dependent on human interests—all made for the service of man. Copernicus consigns man to a position that has become relatively more and more insignificant, locally considered, with each advance in stellar science. Even under the old assumption about the starry heavens, the Hebrew poet was lost in wonder that the Supreme Purpose should have regard to a being so insignificant as man: "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" But with what deepened emphasis may this question of the unscientific Hebrew be put by the modern astronomer? In the mind of the Jew, the "lights" in the vault of heaven which cheered this solid earth seemed, through a wonderful providence, to have been made because man was made.

According to his innocent conception, God had said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth." But how can so grand a spectacle as modern astronomy puts before us be supposed by any reasoning being to have for its final cause the convenience of short-lived animals who somehow find their home on this small planet—transitory in their successive generations, in the Homeric imagination, as the leaves which yearly appear and disappear on the trees of the forest?

The starry heavens and man's relative insignificance in Space.

The progress of modern astronomy has been a running commentary on the *local* insignificance of men, when men are thought of only as individual organisms in the illimitable material system found in possession of the immensity of space. What is the human body, invisible from another planet, in comparison with the infinite material world? The Earth itself, instead of being conceived as the solid centre of all that exists in space, is now recognised as only one in a system of planets, more or less like itself, some immensely larger, all revolving round a central sun, on which they and all their contents depend. Then this solar system itself is only one among innumerable other solar systems, like itself, all it seems revolving collectively round some undiscovered centre. And even this enlarged material system may be only a subordinate part of an inconceivably greater economy; which again in its turn may be an appendage to a greater still; and so onwards and onwards in an unending series of enlargements,—for why should any boundary be set to the material contents of infinite space? What, indeed, is this human animal—so much made of in the anthropocentric conception—when placed beside the innumerable animals which may occupy the innumerable worlds that are moving through Immensity? What is man that he should be regarded at all in a Divine Purpose? Above all, what is man that he should be the one supreme object in that Purpose, as in the Christian conception of redemption, according to the medieval interpretation of it, which so long limited the teleological view.

The insignificance

But if scientific investigation of the contents of *space* reduces the petty organisms of the race of man, from

supremacy in the Divine purpose, to inconceivable insignificance in the material system, this abatement of human pretension is even more difficult to resist when one turns to what modern science has to tell about the course of events in *time*. Above all, this is so if we accept the conception of the causal process, according to which a constant evolution of the material universe proceeds in what, for aught man can know, may be an unbeginning and unending metamorphosis of its molecular constituents. If modern astronomy, inaugurated by Copernicus and Newton, has revealed the insignificance of man's planet among the illimitable starry hosts, and the infinite insignificance of each ephemeral human organism, when all is interpreted in terms of space, what shall be said of the revelations of modern geology, and, much more, of modern biology? They seem to show that all the living bodies on this planet, as well as the planet itself, are transitory issues, in continuous natural processes of integration and disintegration, without beginning and without end. Some of the present laws according to which their changes occur have been discovered; and those persons who claim to be discoverers have thus put some passing pleasures within reach of those by whom the discoveries may be applied, or have enabled them to escape some passing pains; but no ultimate account of all this can be given. Nor can we tell whether the physical order—presumed without proof to be permanent within the narrow sphere of men's discoveries of natural causes—is really the expression of Eternal Reason, or only an accident during a brief interval, within which chaos, in human experience, assumes the semblance of a permanent cosmos.

of men regarded as visible organisms evolved in Time.

In the light of geological and biological discovery and speculation, one seems to see animal life gradually evolving, in its relative place in the continuous natural succession, in a process according to which lower forms of living matter on this planet are slowly followed by higher and more complex. Each generation in this continuous natural evolution, infinitesimally different from that which preceded it, transmits the infinitesimal difference to its

The alternations of integration and disintegration in organised matter.

successors; and thus, out of what may have been the common mass of protoplasm at an early stage, animal life becomes gradually differentiated into ever-multiplying species — the human organism the most notable among the organisms hitherto evolved in the history of this planet. The human organisms, moreover, at the present stage of the unbeginning and endless procession of changes which the material world presents, are found to be in advance of their remote natural ancestors in their intelligence;—with perhaps a prospect, according to the analogies of nature, of continuing to advance with the process of the suns. But human organisms, with their unique characteristic of self-conscious life, are only some of the constructions, naturally presented, in the unbeginning and unending evolution or metamorphosis of matter. They seem to rise into life spontaneously, when the conditioning material causes occur of which organisms of this sort, with their self-consciousness, are the natural sequence. But those physical causes, as well as their consequences, are themselves passive subjects of the natural rules of universal change. Reasoning by analogy, under commonly received maxims, all-embracing materialism may accordingly anticipate, in the future history of this planet, the final extinction of human organisms, in analogy with preceding extinctions of inferior races; with all their works, their scientific discoveries, and indeed all signs of their past existence, in the general disintegration of the solar system. Later still, the whole material universe may be refunded into the original fire-mist out of which it was once evolved; or it may all be condensed into one stupendous mass of molecules—ready to resume another prolonged course of natural integration, or natural creation,—with an issue, it may be, of new stellar and planetary systems; or perhaps of other constructions of matter, unpredictable, because due to physical conditions now unknown, and even by us inconceivable. In the new material universe of that immeasurably remote future, what room is there in retrospective thought for the petty human organisms of an immeasurably remote past

—with their ephemeral records of social institutions and social struggles, scientific discoveries, achievements of mechanical art, humanly admired creations of imagination, religions and philosophies—all dissolved and buried in the dissolution of the vast molecular economy in which, even while they existed, they were as nothing,—for ever forgotten, in the new heavens and new earth, into which a universe, essentially of molecules, has then been transformed, in another of its purposeless metamorphoses? These are only materialistic dreams; but they are dreams in analogy with the universally materialistic conception of existence, which I am asking you to try to realise in imagination.

Indestructibility of matter, and conservation of energy.

Two conditions, which both play an important part in sciences concerned with Matter, are presupposed, but not unconditionally demonstrated. The one is the indestructibility of the material molecules; and the other, the conservation of what is ambiguously called energy, which matter is supposed to involve. The indestructibility of Matter and the conservation of Energy are, as you know, hypotheses which dominate modern inferences about the past and future history of the molecules which, on the materialistic conception of man and the universe, form the elementary totality. Accordingly, as long as the material universe exists—and it is presumed to be indestructible—it must consist of the same quantity of matter,—the same number of molecules;—this through all the metamorphoses which these have undergone, or may yet undergo—in the form of stellar systems, and of living matter, in the various degrees of life, sentient, intelligent, self-conscious, which less or more elaborately organised matter is found to manifest; as well as in future issues which human imagination cannot picture. The assumption of the indestructibility of matter forbids an inconceivable transformation of *nothing* suddenly into *something*, as in the old idea of sudden creation; and obliges us always to suppose and seek for physical causes—presentable to sense, although not necessarily perceptible by human senses—when we try to account, through its exact material equivalent, for each new metamorphosis. The history of the

universe is therefore a history of the natural transformations of what already exists molecularly: the addition of absolutely new molecules, or the absolute extinction of old ones, are unscientific conceptions. Each new appearance in nature implies an equivalent withdrawal of some other appearance, and the whole succession is an endless metamorphosis. Light reappears in equivalent heat: electricity in equivalent magnetism: molecular changes in the living organism, in their equivalent states of conscious life: the births and deaths of men and other living organisms have their resulting compensation: the births and deaths of planets and suns have deaths and births in something else corresponding to them.

Is Causation wholly arbitrary, so that anything might, *a priori*, be the effect of anything?

If all that has been, and that can be, must thus be thought of at last in terms of material molecules, the final problem should be solved in the discovery and exhaustive application of the ultimate law or laws according to which the innumerable molecular metamorphoses proceed. The search for cause is confined to a search for perceptible conditions which constantly precede, or constantly accompany, each perceptible change. Causal sequences are nothing more than the sequences which seem to be constant among material phenomena. As constant, they become a sort of language, in which natural causes are significant of their so-called effects, and the effects of their so-called causes. To explain the universe finally would be to read all its endless changes under their physical laws. An analysis of experience, in quest of connections that are constant, becomes the only means for determining whether this is the cause of that; not any *a priori* idea of the sufficiency, or insufficiency, of this agent to be the cause of this or that sort of change. Abstractly—that is to say, without finding that *this* is always in nature actually followed by *that*—man has no right to assume that only this sort of cause *can* explain that sort of effect; that unorganised atoms can, or that they cannot, account for the self-conscious life that is found on this remote little planet. Enough if experience presents life rising out of certain organic conditions; and then conscious life appearing in

the more elaborate living organisms: one is bound honestly to accept the facts. One is then told to see in the so related molecules and their motions, the true and only explanation of the psychical phenomena which appear in signal organisms, especially in the human, and which are vulgarly referred to what is called "mind,"—the abstract word mind a convenient refuge for human ignorance. At this point of view any material thing appears *a priori* equally fit, or equally unfit, with any other to be the cause, or constant antecedent, of any sort of change. Causality is only the sort of sequence that is imagined to be constant; and as any event may be imagined to follow any other—apart from experience—anything may be the supposed cause of anything that happens. The falling of a pebble may extinguish the sun, for aught we know *a priori;* or the will of a man may disturb the planets in their orbits. When I see one billiard-ball moving in a straight line towards another, even if motion in the second ball should by accident be suggested to me as the result of their contact, might I not conceive hundreds of other sorts of events as well following from that particular cause. Might not both the balls remain at absolute rest? Might not the first ball return in a straight line, or leap away from the second in any linear direction? All these suppositions are conceivable. Why then should we give the preference to one of them, which *a priori* is not more consistent or conceivable than the rest? No *a priori* reasonings will ever be able to show us an unconditional necessity in reason for this preference.

The possible issues of a universe of molecules in motion in the infinite succession.

Under this sensuous and empirical causality as the only human conception of power; with survival of the physically fittest as its highest biological illustration; with assumed indestructibility of matter and conservation of energy for working hypotheses; and the speculative postulate of an unbeginning and unending succession of causal integrations and disintegrations of a universe of molecules in perpetual motion—with all this postulated, abundant opportunity seems to be given, *in endless time*, for infinite variety in the relations of the molecules to one another, and for all sorts of resulting molecular combina-

tions. These when they emerge, as far as man can see before trial, may each be a cause of any sort of effect. So, under this ultimate conception of the universe, what forbids that in the course of time *one* of the innumerable issues of molecular collocation might be—that actually presented by the universe of individual things and persons in which we find ourselves living, in the economy of which the human organism forms a part, and into which each man has been naturally introduced. The universe of molecules, at this stage of its temporal evolution, includes those molecular organisms which, while they last, are found in experience to be the physical causes of different degrees of life; in the more refined elaborations, the natural causes of sentient life; and in due time, even of life that is self-conscious.

Self-conscious lives the supposed effects of special molecular organisations which naturally occur in the infinite history of molecules in motion.

Under this materialistic conception, the universe seems to be completely emptied of those alleged striking examples of divine adaptation of natural means to human ends, in which, under another final conception, this visible world of ours once seemed to abound; which impressed ordinary minds, when presented by Cicero or Paley; or, earlier still, by the Hebrew poet, to whom the heavens "declared the glory of God, and the firmament" showed "His handywork." Under the Hebrew conception of things, "day unto day" was uttering this higher "speech," and night unto night this higher "knowledge." As the Jew looks at it, "there is no speech nor language" where this Divine Voice is not heard: "their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Under the molecular final idea of existence, on the contrary, the heavens and the earth, with all their living and intelligent population, declare the powers of innumerable material molecules, in the infinity of their possible relations in the eternal succession. Out of any natural cause, any sort of issue—insentient mass or living organism, sentient or self-conscious life, for all we can predict *a priori* — is able to attain to its actual but ephemeral existence as naturally as any other. That the motion of one billiard-ball should be the natural sequence of contact with another billiard-ball in motion,

is neither less nor more wonderful in itself, than that an elaborate special organisation of molecules, itself the natural issue of the infinite possibilities of the universal motion, should, while the organism lasts, be the prior term in a sequence in which the consequent term should be a transitory self-conscious life. The self-conscious being may seem to himself to be continuous in his experience of memory; and he lasts a little longer than the visible motion in the impelled billiard-ball. Causal sequence could in no case have been predicted without experience of its constancy: in each case it is equally credible and certain after this experience. According to the rules which the molecules are found exemplifying in their motions, the particular sort of collocation of molecules of which billiard-balls are made is the issue of comparatively few and simple natural experiments; the competitive process of survival of the fittest, for example in the case of the curious human organism, must have involved innumerable rejections, with all the involved waste of product, before man, with his intelligence, and his self-regarding and benevolent dispositions, gradually developed. With this mechanical difference of atomic elaboration only, the two sorts of natural sequence are analogous—if causality means only customary sequence. In neither is there any evidence of external contrivance, as in the work we attribute to the design of a human artist; and, moreover, so-called effects of human contrivance are themselves only examples of natural laws, which issued in the natural evolution of the organism of the contriver, with its correlative conscious life. The watchmaker, when his organism is issuing watches, is really only an insignificant part of the natural process of world-making and universal metamorphosis that is constantly going on. Natural sequence — not Purpose, benevolent or malevolent—is the final solvent of the problem of the universe. Deeper than this the human line cannot go, in the attempt to sound the infinite abyss, when one has to explain the universe under the postulates of Universal Materialism. The intrepid scientific inquirer, with his

universe conceived as ultimately molecules in motion, who recognises nothing in metaphysical implicates of experience that transcends this hypothesis, accepts it unappalled, in the intrepid spirit of science. He is ready to say that "things are what they are, and are not other things" — but this with his eye turned exclusively to phenomena of matter in their relations of natural sequence.

The material organism *is* the Man, in Universal Materialism.

Man and his material organism are absolutely identified in this final interpretation of the universe, in which man consequently becomes one of its most insignificant items: his spiritual existence is measured by the size and continuance of his body, which *is* himself. The conscious lives of men, especially those who have been evolved in this advanced era of the universal history, are the most remarkable manifestations of psychical phenomena that come within man's experience; but even this sort is invariably embodied: our only example of self-conscious life is the human organism, in its little more than momentary existence. With a human organism, naturally given, the spiritual life of man mysteriously springs forth, "like the appearance of the genius when Aladdin rubbed his lamp in the Eastern story," or like any other natural fact which appears in its due season.

Man thus viewed is only a paltry part of physical nature.

It is thus that man is reduced from the fancied height of a moral agent, who, so far as such, must be independent of physical law, to the extent of his moral responsibility: he is identified with those aggregates of atoms in the natural evolution, which differ from the lifeless things of inorganic nature only in the fact of their organic connection with pleasurable or painful feeling, and their other automatic conscious states, manifested in the course of molecular changes of which the organism and its surroundings are the subjects — invisible states as wholly automatic, or dependent on molecular motions, as the visible changes in the organisms themselves, "Man, physical, intellectual, moral," we are told, "is as much a part of nature, as purely a product of the cosmic process, as the humblest weed." Therefore, men at their best present only this ephemeral consciousness, which emerges

from the always indifferent, and often cruel, natural mechanism, within which—without their own leave—they find themselves inextricably involved. Inconsolatory to the individual as this discovery of what he is, and the world in which he is, may be, it is inexhaustible in resources of physical explanation. It explains, as a physical consequence of relations among molecules which occur in the course of their history, man's illusion that he can ever be morally free from natural law, and responsible for what he does. For the illusion is found in invariable sequence to certain organic states, which are themselves the issue of innumerable molecular motions and collocations that have occurred in the history of the material universe. The sufferings through which sentient beings on this planet pass, and the sins with which men are charged, are in this way seen in their infinite insignificance, as only phenomena in the succession of natural changes among the atoms which for ever occupy the immensity of space: they are not more significant ultimately than the pains or pleasures of insects too minute to be seen by the microscope in the summer sunshine now seem to us. Good and evil, right and wrong, merit and demerit, self-satisfaction and remorse, are scientifically discovered to be words which have acquired their misleading meaning at an inferior era in this world's history; through man's natural ignorance at the time, that he is only an item in the unbeginning and unending succession of molecular changes, which Universal Materialism assumes to be finally co-extensive with reality.

Deification of matter.

Yet, at another point of view—if anything might be the cause of anything, because it may conceivably be its predecessor — might one not attribute to the molecules into which the universe is resolved all the attributes of man, and even those that are attributed to God? And if Deity may be thus latent in the molecular universe, is it more than a question of names — as between this omnipotent and omniscient Matter, on the one hand, and the God of pantheism, or even of theism, on the other. Where is the universal materialist to stop in what he

attributes to Matter, if he may attribute to it the rational acts and moral experience of a human body? One asks in reply, what the materialist who argues thus means by Matter? It must mean more than molecular motion.

The transitory illusion of Morality.

But the molecularly constituted "deity" of Universal Materialism has, it seems, caused, at one stage in the development of man, what are discovered to be illusions —under later evolved conceptions to which the laws of nature are now automatically conducting scientific men —conceptions, too, which may in their turn be all as naturally dissolved, later on in the progressive evolution. Amongst those illusory natural products may hereafter come to be included the moral ideas which presuppose the importance of the race of man, as compared, say, with a race of animalcules, and the ethical presuppositions from which men infer the need for individual sacrifice on behalf of the race, for the sake of a longer survival of the whole. Conscience begins to appear as an artificial device for the prolongation of the race: it was naturally generated at that inferior stage in the history of the molecules at which human organisms were naturally induced to claim a unique dignity and importance. But scientific disinterestedness — itself a physical sequence, on occasion of certain molecular motions—comes afterwards to see that the man and the reptile are alike insignificant, being both the transitory outcome of universal physical law. To call an agent in a distinctive sense "moral" or "spiritual," is to apply a misleading predicate; for the "agency" can be only the physical law under which a certain condition of the human brain is constantly accompanied by the delusion that love and will and conscience are somehow superior to brain, or to the molecules on which all ultimately depends. For it is a natural law that, at a certain stage in its evolution, the organism which constitutes man becomes what we call *ethical*, and subject to the delusion that man is free to struggle against evil.

The transitory illusion called Reason.

But more than dissolution of morality would follow from premisses which yield a wholly molecular solution of the problem of self-conscious life in a molecular universe;—if indeed any conclusion about anything could be

consistently drawn in such a universe. For reason itself —reason to which science is wont to appeal as the supreme tribunal — is transformed into one of the innumerable transitory issues of purposeless organic conditions. Intelligence, with science as its product, and conscience, with morality as its product, come to be conceived as only transitory natural outcomes of molecular conditions. The thinking and observing processes themselves—those processes through which the materialist finds that conscious mind, in all its states, is virtually molecules in motion—are only a part of the molecular process. Human intelligence and human conscience are only modes of the ephemeral phenomena to which the molecular universe, in its eternal flux of molecules and aggregates of molecules, is supposed to be giving birth, at different stages in the course of its evolution. Its verified inferences, as well as its unproved hypotheses, are all alike transitory illusions; —if we are not allowed to presuppose in the primary data *more* than molecules that seem under certain conditions to transform themselves into self-conscious life. And thus Monism, at least in the form of Universal Materialism, itself disappears, along with conscious intelligence, in the abyss of Universal Nescience.

Are science and duty accidental issues of molecular motions?

Can we accept, as a solution of the universe, and of man as a part of it, *this*, which asks us habitually to think of the whole as finally purposeless molecular aggregation and motion, wherein intelligence and conscience are transitory issues, but which, in the final darkness of Universal Materialism, can, while they last, put in no claim to determine the interpretation of the whole? Can what is commonly meant by Matter consistently claim this final universality and supremacy? We shall consider what invisible consciousness has to say for itself, when thus confronted, in this remote corner, by a universe of only molecules and molecular sequences.

LECTURE II.

PANEGOISM.

The exaggeration of the Universal Materialist.

HUMAN organisms and their self-conscious life appear, at the point of view of atomism or moleculism, to be only part, and a very insignificant part, of the transitory natural issue of the universe of molecules in motion. They emerge for a time in a remote and petty corner of immensity, under those particular physical conditions which are found to give rise to a conscious organism. Mind — *matter transformed into consciousness*, according to materialism—is one among innumerable other transformations which molecules temporarily undergo; not in itself more significant than any other of the many sorts of quantitative difference, in size, shape, or arrangement, of molecules and molecular masses, on which conscious life, as well as all the other qualities of things, are, on this conception of existence, assumed to depend. Similarly as fire differs from water, and water from gold, on account of supposed differences in the size, shape, motion, and consistency of their respective constituent molecules, —differences which might be described with precision if one could construct microscopes powerful enough to reveal them, — so, on the same condition, those special characteristics of molecular organisation which give rise to consciousness, when *they* happen to become actual, might in like manner be observed in detail. This is the universe of the materialist, as it rises in imagination, when the datum of a material world is taken by philosophy as the one final datum.

What of the ego?

But has the percipient and self-conscious life by which man is characterised, with its scientific and moral outcome, which has started up in this remote planetary corner of the material world, nothing more than this to say for itself?

The exaggeration of the first postulate occurs later than that of the second.

The invisible self-conscious Ego does not so soon force itself upon attention as the boundless and endless world of outward things presented to the senses does. At least the Ego does not obtrude itself upon the unreflecting as exclusively entitled to be called *real*. Its assumed reality seems instead to resolve into transitory modes of the solid and extended organisms presented to the senses. Reflection upon conscious life follows in the wake of spontaneous consciousness; for thought must have appropriate experience, in the form of spiritual states already passed through, before it begins to express spiritual life in terms of science, or to see the immense philosophical significance of living Mind.

> "The baby new to earth and sky,
> What time his tender palm is prest
> Against the circle of the breast,
> Has never thought that this is 'I.'
>
> But as he grows, he gathers much,
> And learns the use of 'I' and 'me,
> And finds I am not what I see,
> And other than the things I touch;
>
> So rounds he to a separate mind,
> From whence clear memory may begin."

Or again—

> "Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why;
> For is He not all, but thou, that has power to feel 'I am I?'"

The outward transformed into the inward.

Accordingly outward things are apt to be exaggerated into the one final form of existence sooner than the individual and invisible ego. In the early stages of man's history he is more ready to suppose that consciousness can be refunded into the universe of outward things, than that the universe of outward things can be refunded into his

own self-conscious perceptions. We are all in our childish years more or less materialists. And we find the materialist point of view the favourite one in the childhood of the race of man. In early Hellenic speculation Socrates awoke the sense of individuality and personality. But it was with the rise of Christianity that the idea of the individual person unfolded into moral distinctness. The Christian Fathers found something in a self-conscious person that was inadequately expressed in the Hellenic and Roman thought of the pre-Christian world. "Great is the revelation given in memory," one finds Augustine exclaiming in his 'Confessions,'—"great is memory, in all its depth and manifold intensity; the strange reality revealed in it is my mind; and my mind is myself. Fear and amazement overcome me when I think of this. Yet men go abroad to gaze upon mountains and waves, broad rivers, wide oceans, and the courses of the stars, and overlook *themselves*, the crowning wonder." In the thousand years after Augustine one finds many utterances in harmony with this. And the supreme significance of the Ego survived the modern reaction against scholastic thought. In the new conceptions of the universe and the ultimate meaning of life which struggled into existence in the mind of Descartes, the watchword was—*Cogito ergo sum: Ego sum cogitans. Ego* was the one essential fact. Not atoms but ego was taken as the primary element in the universe. His own invisible self is what is nearest to each person, and his world is the world which depends upon his consciousness. This was the starting-point or birth of the new philosophic spirit, which so strenuously asserted itself in the seventeenth century. The more this invisible fact is pondered, the more one seems to see the dependence of the universe on it. So the Ego—conscious and percipient — comes by degrees to absorb outward things, converting an otherwise illusory outwardness into real inwardness. Like Actæon, changed into the stag, and then torn to pieces by his hounds on Mount Cithæron, the once too obtrusive world of molecules is at last swallowed up in the world of one's own conscious life or personality.

When one takes his own living consciousness, recognised as the universe of *his* experience, for the philosophical point of view—instead of quantities of molecules in space, and molecular changes in time—the final conception of the universe undergoes a radical transformation; and the new conception of reality seems deeper and truer than the old one. Conscious life in me—conscious life wherever it arises—no longer looks like an ephemeral and insignificant accident, that somehow, through a concourse of molecules, has happened to make its appearance on this planet in this era of its history. I seem now unable to suppose that percipient conscious life in me, and in other possible egos, might all cease for ever, and yet that, after its extinction, the aggregates of molecules in their molecular masses, with all their properties, might continue to exist as they did before its extinction. Percipient life seems now to be able to say for itself, that *it* is the one paramount necessity—the one indispensable condition—of reality, and of the changes and sequences that occur in what is really. The introduction of active and percipient consciousness into existence looks like the introduction of light into a dark room, that is in consequence distinguished by the beauty and variety which it presents. In the darkness the forms and colours that emerge were virtually unreal. The brilliant spectacle becomes real only when the lamp is carried into the dark chamber. If light had never existed, or if it were now to be suddenly and for ever annihilated throughout the universe, the visible glories of earth and sky, as well as of the darkened room, would all cease to be real: and if light had never existed, they would never have existed, as we now see them; for they were realised through the command, "Let there be light." So with the material world all realised through the percipient ego, which thus seems to show itself the unit of the universe. "Let there be a percipient ego," and all becomes the reality that we perceive. The reflective thinker tries in vain to realise the material world—the universe of molecules and their aggregates—after all conscious life has been withdrawn from the universe.

Conscious life the light of reality.

The fate of an unperceived material world.

Consider what would become of the world that is revealed in vision and touch—the world which is the object of daily interest to every human being — which is the means, when scientifically interpreted, of advancing man's comfort, and on which society and civilisation depend;— what would become of this solid and expanded world— of all the physical and natural sciences too, and even of materialism itself as the living philosophy of a conscious being—if the Ego were withdrawn, and conscious reason were for ever extinct.

Intellectual suicide.

For one thing, all intelligible experience of outward things, including the philosophy which teaches that existence is all molecular, *itself depends on what is inward.* All science is dependent on conscious life, which, as felt, is not a visible molecule or mass of molecules. The perceptions and coherent inferences, of which living knowledge of external things consists, are indispensable even for the construction of the universal materialism in which man looks so insignificant. But for conscious life in this little corner of the universe, or elsewhere, the whole world of outward things would be for ever unrealised. If the persons who are percipient of the things that move in space, and who by reasoning combined with observation discover natural laws, are found, in the progress of their own discoveries, to be themselves, in the last resort, only transitory issues of unintelligent and unintelligible Matter, this materialistic philosophy of theirs must, like all that depends upon faculties so produced, be unworthy of trust. Human science is discredited in the degradation of the human beings in whom it is converted into an accident of the universal flux. For sciences and philosophy are then only accidents in the history of human organisms, which, in this era of molecular evolution, happen to have been formed on this little planet. The supposed discovery that the whole is ultimately only continuous mechanical motion of atoms, without moral guarantee in a divine natural order, discredits every pretended discovery. Unless there is that in the universe which is more than evolution of matter into organisms — when "matter"

means only phenomena as presented in sense — there can be no valid science, no valid materialist philosophy. The testimony given by a human adventurer to the fact that he has been cast up inexplicably, in a succession of the molecular changes which are the only ultimate reality, and who thinks that he sees scientifically that all conscious life must sooner or later disappear, is testimony which, under such conditions, can neither be vindicated nor refuted. The issue is a literally unutterable scepticism about everything. The key which pretended to open the secret of reality has been taken away in the very act of using it. Universal Materialism is intellectual suicide.

A conscious ego greater than a universe of unconscious things.

Larger and deeper human experience seems to involve a continual protest against this. The supposition that intelligence is essentially molecular is found to be inadequate, if not self-contradictory, philosophy. Modern science of outward things, of which man is justly proud, as among the most signal of his conquests, becomes only one among innumerable other sorts of accidental and temporary modification of atomic movement; culminating in the discovery of the irrelevancy and insignificance of the conscious reason that is the apparent instrument of the discoveries. Realisation, in the form of living thought, of the mechanical law of gravitation, or of the still more comprehensive biological law of natural evolution — including evolution of those scientific discoveries themselves —surely implies, in the final constitution of the universe, something deeper than an originally unconscious and accidental concurrence of atoms. We are reminded of the sentiment of Pascal. Physically, man is a petty transitory organism. When we measure *its* size and duration, and compare this with the Immensities and the Eternities, man is insignificant indeed. A vapour, or a drop of water, is found enough to compass his destruction. Yet even if the illimitable material world were to employ for the destruction of men all the molecular forces that are supposed to belong to its atoms, there is still that in man which is more noble than the matter by which the human organisms would be destroyed, greater, too, than the dissolved organism. For the *man* would be *conscious* of his

fate; while the material universe would be *unconscious* of its victory. The true office and standing of man in the universe is to be read, not in the quantity of space that his body is seen to fill; nor in the period of time during which the physical evolution of which his body is the ephemeral issue has been going on—but in the invisible life, actively percipient and self-conscious, which emerges. Invisible egos are therefore superior to aggregates of molecules, however vast in size. The Ego is greater than the whole material world, when it is abstracted from all percipient life: it is greater than all the objects that can be presented to the senses; because the ego is conscious and active, while things presented to sense are known only as powerless and unconscious masses.

What do we mean when we affirm the real existence of matter or molecules?

The Panegoist, in short, raises a question which Universal Materialism overlooks. He asks what the word *matter* ultimately means, when the word is rightly used. What is meant by the real existence of a molecule, or an aggregate of molecules, or by the reality of things in motion? What is meant by the outwardness of a thing, or the external existence of a thing? By questions like these we bring into light the *deity* of materialism. We begin to see that there is more than we had supposed in *perception* of things. There is here a chasm, which the history of philosophical inquiry suggests the difficulty of bridging,—a chasm between living perceptions, which succeed one another in the absolute privacy of one's own conscious life, and, on the other hand, solid and extended things, molecules and masses of molecules—crudely supposed to exist as one now sees them and touches them, whether or not there exists in the universe any percipient who is seeing or touching. The things called "outward," and supposed to be independent of all percipient life, in the absence of all percipients lose their qualities; for these are no longer realised by the living factor of reality. They disappear as empty abstractions, when all percipient life is withdrawn; so that one is led to ask whether an aggregate of molecules, or even a single molecule, *could* continue to exist in the way it now appears to our senses to do, after the extinction of all life in the universe.

Again. When one speaks of external things, he must include among them the minute organism which he calls his own body — that which, for the materialist, is the whole man. It is an object the local insignificance of which, among the other contents of space and duration, signifies to a materialistic imagination the insignificance of man, as an item in the universe. For one's own body is a part of the material world. Even though it is called "living matter," it is still, like all other space-occupying things, external to the private self of consciousness. When it is seen in this light, the thought occurs that no sufficient reason can be produced to show that conscious life *must* be embodied life, although ours is embodied. Is that fact a reason which forbids the supposition that I may pass through all the different sorts of sentient or mental experience of which I have been conscious since I was born, *without being embodied?* Why may I not have the mental experience called seeing, or that other sort called touching, without my present visual and tactual organs, or even without an organism of gross molecular matter? Our senses, too, might conceivably have been other than they are—more numerous, and thus presenting outward things clothed in qualities now absolutely unimaginable by man; or less numerous, in which case much that normally constituted men can now perceive and imagine would be unimaginable. Of this last we have examples in human beings who are born blind, and to whom words expressive of visual ideas to us who see are meaningless. For aught we know, there may be percipient beings in some other corner of the universe who are each destitute of all our external senses, and endowed with five or five hundred other sorts of senses, each different in kind from any of ours. If so, what means "matter" in their perception and conception of it? It can have none of the qualities which we refer to the things we call outward; and it must have five, or five hundred, sorts of properties, all of which a human being would be as unable to imagine as the born-blind man is to imagine scarlet—a quality which Locke's blind friend pictured as something like the sound of a trumpet.

The human organism is, and the self-conscious person is not, part of the material world of sense.

The properties of matter distinguished as primary or quantitative, and secondary or imputed.

But we must return from conjectures to facts. It has been customary to distinguish the properties of bodies as of two sorts — those, which are *essential* to body, deprived of which it would not be named matter; and those, on the other hand, which might disappear without its ceasing to be called matter. The first sort are primary properties of matter; the others are called secondary properties. In their primary or essential attributes, bodies — whether large or small — are space-occupying: they are movable solids: they can be formulated mechanically, in terms of mathematical quantity. The secondary properties, again, are those which invest bodies with their chief human interest. They are those in virtue of which they are of practical importance to man—their hardness or softness, their heat or cold, their colours, sounds, odours, and tastes—all which, as distinguished from the former sort, are especially called qualities; — for the others are quantities rather than qualities. In fact, on the molecular final conception of existence, the original atoms were supposed to be quantities *only*, without qualitative differences; and the innumerable differences which we observe in the secondary qualities commonly imputed to external things were referred to quantitative differences too minute to be seen,— differences in the shape, size, position, and motions of their constituent molecules. Democritus, the representative of early materialism, argues that all the qualitative differences in external things are caused by — *i.e.*, are physically dependent on — their quantitative molecular differences. Water, for instance, presents qualities different from iron, because its constituent molecules are round and smooth, and do not fit into one another; those of iron, on the contrary, are jagged, uneven, and densely aggregated. This conjecture of Democritus reappears in Descartes and Locke; with the cautious qualification in the case of Locke—that if the qualities imputed to outward things are *not* differenced by their dependence on quantitative relations of their constituent molecules, they must at last depend upon something more mysterious.

Now, looking in the first place only at the secondary

properties of the material world, it is obvious that they depend upon sentient and percipient life. We cannot even imagine taste or smell existing externally, in the absence of all sentient intelligence, except by reading them in terms of the non-resembling molecules and molecular motions of which they are supposed to be the correlatives. The *atoms* of which fire is composed have themselves no *sensation* of heat, like that which I have when I approach fire. But if the mental sensation is abstracted, what remains that is at all imaginable, to constitute the meaning of the word heat, except motion among aggregates of molecules? Heat is necessarily read in terms of motion, when it is imagined as something external. When I cease to read it in terms of felt sensation of heat, I *must* read it, if I read it at all, in terms of molecular motion. An orange becomes virtually colourless in the dark, and must lose odour and taste, when sensuous perception ceases: the residuary issue is a mass of colourless, inodorous, tasteless molecules. Analysis of the properties of bodies in this way obliges us to strip the material world of all its secondary and interesting qualities;—except so far as they can be translated, in terms of the atomic motions of which they are the correlatives. And physical science has not discovered all the varieties of molecular motion which, on the hypothesis of molecular correlation, correspond, under natural law, to the innumerable varieties of secondary qualities.

Obvious dependence of the secondary qualities upon a percipient.

But the subordination of the world to the percipient ego, it may be argued at the point of view of Panegoism, does not stop here. The process is not arrested when it has stripped molecules and their aggregates of all that gives them human interest. It may be further argued that the aggregates of molecules, and the molecules themselves, become empty inconceivable abstractions, after they have been stripped of their interesting qualities, and are left to exist in an unresistant, colourless, silent, inodorous, and tasteless condition, neither cold nor hot. For the chief primary property of things—occupancy of space—is itself dependent upon sensations or feelings—with which it is blended so inextricably that we cannot imagine a

Dependence likewise of solid quantity, or primary qualities, on percipient mind.

colourless mass of extended matter. An extended thing without any secondary qualities cannot be imagined as an outward or material thing at all. Strip things of all the qualities which really depend upon a percipient, and after that no perceptible qualities remain. But this subtraction of *all their properties* is practically the subtraction of matter; therefore matter cannot have real existence independently of all percipient life. At the most, only an unqualified and unquantified *something* remains, of which nothing can be either affirmed or denied, —an empty negation, not worth taking into account as a primary datum.

Molecules thus become empty abstractions, and things resolve into feelings.

If all the properties of material things are in this way proved to be dependent upon living perception, the common but confused supposition that some of them exist externally—meaning by that independently of all percipient life, may be argued by the extreme Panegoist to be contrary to reason. Matter is realised, or brought into actual existence, by the sentient ego, through whose felt experience it becomes what we find it to be. The universe, the Panegoist argues, cannot be finally a universe of independent molecules: it is finally the independent ego;—with molecules, aggregates of molecules, and their qualities, all sustained in the conscious experience of the ego. Accordingly, one who looks upon the universe at the panegoistic point of view sees in the whole material world — stars, their planets, this planet with all its visible and tangible contents, including our own bodies— only inward experiences, proceeding in an established order which enables us to foresee other inward experiences still future,—all which orderly universe within the mind would necessarily become extinct with the extinction of the percipient life of the ego, on which the whole is practically suspended. Our final conception of the world, and of what reality means, is even more deeply transformed in this intrepid Panegoism, than was the old-fashioned anthropocentric conception by the modern discoveries of the astronomer. Instead of an external flux of variously qualified things, in orderly motion in space, the universe becomes a flux of orderly ideas and feelings, in the history

of my conscious ego. In this transformation scene my conscious life is the final supposition — not the starry heaven, with its molecular occupants, in the immensity of an independent space. Nothing now appears in the universe of existence but conscious mind; and the only mind of which I am conscious is my own.

The conception of power in outward things also transformed in Panegoism.

At this panegoistical point of view, a transformation in the materialist ideas of causality and power is likewise going on. For the Ego is found on reflection to be a power, more deeply and truly than molecules, or aggregates of molecules, are perceived to be powers. In recognising one's self as a moral agent, one finds that he is obliged to acknowledge *more* in moral agency than sense reveals in the "agency" of molecules and their masses. In outward nature, *per se*, all that is presented is phenomena, followed by, or changed into, other phenomena, —a continuous procession of caused causes—an endless orderly procession of passive metamorphoses—each term in the procession the passive subject of a rule; but without innate activity being found in any of the units of the series, in the way self-originated power is found by conscience in my agency. For conscience obliges me to recognise *myself* as the final agent in all changes which evoke the feeling and conviction of remorse. The moral and immoral acts of the Ego thus differ in kind from caused causes in external nature. None of *them* are known to be agents that originate their own acts, as I am found by conscience to be, when I am judged to be the creator of an act for which I blame myself. Under this deeper conception of power, outward things are agents only metaphorically: they are empty of real efficiency. So power proper comes to be regarded as that in which change originates; not that which is only a constant antecedent under a natural rule, which *a priori* one has no reason to suppose might not have been different. The physically scientific conception of causality, as continuous sequence of appearances, is seen to be thin and shallow. Instead of matter and its forces explaining everything, they really explain nothing: all the conditions of change under gravi-

tation, and the still wider law of evolution, themselves need to be explained; and the only light we have for explanation comes from morally responsible agency. External things are agents only metaphorically: the ego alone is originative.

Matter only a system of interpretable sense signs.

In this way, instead of being an aggregate of material agents, to each of which certain issues may be finally referred, the world that is unfolded to our five senses presents only aggregates of passive sense appearances, called sensible things. These are related to one another, not as an agent is connected with effects which originate absolutely in himself, but as constant antecedents of events yet future, which they passively signify to us in a practical way, because they are in constant connection with them. What are called *causes* in the material world are only premonitors, which warrant men in expecting the changes they are believed to signify. They are the appointed forerunners of events, for which they prepare those who are able to interpret them. The world presented to sense is conceived as a cosmos, only because it is conceived to be this system of interpretable sense signs: it is interpretable because certain sorts of its presented appearances are found in constant sequence with certain other sorts: faith in this constancy makes men infer that when an instance of the one sort appears, an instance of the other sort may be expected. The material world becomes transformed, under this conception, into a system of passive sense signs; and we find that we are able to interpret usefully phenomena which signify coming pleasure, and others which signify coming pain.

The Panegoist universe.

At the point of view of Panegoism, the universe is born and dies with the person who experiences it; and the only person of whose existence I am conscious is myself. Matter and God are absorbed and lost in Me. The solitary Ego, as the only datum, reduces human experience to absurdity, if not to contradiction. Unlike Universal Materialism and Pantheism, Panegoism is a form of Monism which can hardly lay claim to a historical existence, although some highly speculative minds seem to have

boldly accepted it, as the logical issue of their analysis of the three primary data. But its exaggerations at least help to illustrate the subordinate office of Matter in the universe of existence, and its true relation to Spirit in human experience, in which the visible world appears as the servant of the invisible mind, having this for its chief end. It is chiefly as an aid to reflection upon the absurdity of dominant Materialism that I have enlarged upon Panegoism.

Another alternative.

I turn now to the third primary datum, in order to ponder its adequacy to the demands of reason and experience, when it is taken to supersede the other two. May the final intellectual and moral satisfaction desired by the philosopher be found, when God is assumed as the only reality, and when we think of Matter and the Ego as only illusory modes of God? This third phase of philosophical Monism will be next considered.

LECTURE III.

PANTHEISM.

Retrospect. LET me recall the train of thought thus far. At the outset I put before you my conception of the divine or universal problem with which one is concerned, when engaged with "Natural Theology in the widest sense of the term." It is the supreme problem of human life in the world in which man awakes into consciousness. That what is experienced exists, is what most of us take for granted: this primary faith is illustrated whenever things and persons are presented to us in space and time. But a *guarantee* is needed for the final moral and intellectual trustworthiness of experience, in the ever-changing universe in which I find myself. I have entered it as a stranger and involuntarily, and when I look around I ask—What sort of universe is this? May I look at it with trust and hope, as an orderly system? or must I resign myself to final distrust and despair? What am I, who have become self-conscious and percipient; and for what purpose am I in this conscious life? In what, or in whom, am I at this moment living and moving and having my being? These are questions in which the final problem of existence is raised; they are questions with which philosophy and religion are concerned in common. Philosophy culminates in answers to them: religion presupposes a practical answer. Religion does not, indeed, involve a complete solution of infinite problems by the intellect. For religion is a moral relation of thought, emotion, and will to a finally divine

environment; and this remains good although the divine reality is incompletely comprehensible in a human understanding. A religious life of adoration and moral trust is not only consistent with, but involves recognition of, ultimate mystery—mystery to which reasoning, in abstraction from the moral and emotional elements in human nature, is inadequate. Does not the highest philosophy take the form of religious confidence that man need not be put to intellectual or moral confusion in the end?

Articulation of this problem: three primary data.

So much regarding the problem of Natural or Philosophical Theology. Our next step was to articulate it more definitely. There are three final existences—namely, my inner conscious Self; the outer world of Matter, which immediately environs me; and God, or the universal Power. These are our three primary data. Under various conceptions of what each means, they are all tacitly assumed by mankind. For the history of man is really a record of the gradual, often interrupted, evolution of three central ideas—one's own personality—one's material environment—and Divine or Universal Power. Our conception of each is modified by the manner in which it is regarded in relation to the other two. For the last questions regarding each cannot be raised without involving answers to root questions about the others. In the early stages of man's development, self, or the personal factor, is only obscurely recognised. The idea of law or order in the sense environment is also dim in primitive ages, as at first in the life of every man. And the idea of God originally appeared in crude forms of fetichism and polytheism, afterwards of interference with natural order.

Their reduction to a philosophical unity—materialistic, egoistic, or pantheistic.

After these preliminaries we entered the First Part of the course, to contemplate philosophical endeavours to reduce the three primary data to One. With his craving for unity, the theorist is dissatisfied when a mysterious plurality instead of an imaginable unity is offered as final reality. The instinct of the speculative thinker accordingly makes him try to reduce the three primary existences. So it comes about that some are disposed to a material unity, and take Matter as the last word about

what exists. The introspective thinker, again, exaggerates the conscious Ego, as the materialists exaggerate the visible and tangible world: he sees his surroundings dependent on the Ego; and his last word about what he is living and moving and having his being in is, that he is living and moving and having his being in himself. But neither molecules in their aggregates and organisms, nor the Ego in its successive conscious states, provides the desired unity to those who think deeply. A final reality, either in things of sense or in myself, is inconsistent with the omnipresence and omnipotence — Infinity, in a word — which must belong to the final Power. The Ego and the things by which I am surrounded accordingly lose their own reality: they are conceived as unreal modifications of One Infinite Reality.

Pantheistic unity and necessity alone unconditioned.

Here are three ultimate conceptions of existence—that under which All is resolved into a materialistic unity; that under which All is resolved into my individual spiritual unity; and that under which All is resolved into the Divine unity. But while each of these exaggerations of one datum, to the exclusion of the other two, has its advocates, perhaps none of the three has ever been advocated with thoroughgoing consistency. We have already contemplated Universal Materialism and Panegoism, both of them untheistic when logical. Now we are to look at Pantheism, in which the idea of God is exclusive. Pantheism alone among the three gives the conception of absolute unity.

Matter as the ultimate unity.

We found modern Materialism, under the influence of sensuous imagination, ready to accept physical science as the solution of the universal problem. The physical organism is supposed to explain reason and will as manifested in self-consciousness; and natural history of the organism is substituted for introspective criticism of rational and volitional activity. The details of organic evolution, in the natural sequence of biological causation, are without doubt full of interest; but they are all irrelevant when we want to hear the final voice of reason itself. It is impossible to identify rational consciousness with what moves in space. The natural

science of the visible organism is irrelevant to theism: natural procedure is not atheistic; nor is rational consciousness resolved into molecular motion, merely because it may be the natural outcome of physical conditions.

The Ego as the ultimate unity.

I proceeded next to ask what egoistic immaterialism has to say for itself. For some of the consequences of thinking the universe of things and persons under an ultimately materialistic unity appear in a striking way, when we reverse our point of view, and look at the universe wholly in the light of our own inward conscious life. We find that space-occupying things depend on conscious perception in unexpected ways, and it is to rational consciousness that materialism itself necessarily appeals at last in all its own reasonings. It was chiefly to illustrate this inevitable dependence of the outward upon the inward, that I tried to make the Ego the final unity in the universal system, resolving outward things and God into my subjective experience. It is true that Panegoism is hardly ever an accepted philosophical system, at least with a full concession of its logical consequences. It has been attributed to Descartes, as an implicate of his method. Fichte, at a certain stage in his philosophical education, has sometimes been considered its representative. Hypothetically stated, it suggests a *reductio ad absurdum* of Universal Materialism. It reduces the only reality of the materialist to empty negation, when the light and life of percipient consciousness is withdrawn from existence. But Panegoism, too, is self-destructive: it shuts the ego in suicidal isolation; because postulates of reason, which connect individual consciousness with what is outward and with the infinite, are, on its narrow basis, dissolved in the one datum of solitary individuality.

God as the only reality.

But there is another alternative to a universe of Matter and also to the Ego universe. There is the recognition of Infinite Being as the only possible reality. Mind and matter, in us and around us, under this conception have only illusory reality—not more or other than as transitory phases of One Absolute Reality, of which the finite universe, in all its degrees, from minerals up to men,

is the necessitated illusion. The universe conceived pantheistically is the eternal involuntary evolution of Infinite Being: the being that we call "our own" is only a modification of the One Being. Atoms in their visible organisations, and the ego in its conscious states, are modes of Infinite Being, the only Substance and Power. This is pantheistic Monism, or the necessitated unity of the All. The innumerable atoms of materialism present an empirical and generic unity, rather than the necessary and infinite One. In Infinite Being alone we find unity that is logically inconsistent with real plurality; necessity that is inconsistent with real contingency; eternity that supersedes duration.

Are finite things and persons substance, in the way that infinite Being is Substance?

Infinite Being, or the One Substance, seems, therefore, to have a claim in reason to exclusiveness which neither of the two other data can produce. God is more truly substance and power, even under ordinary conceptions of what substance and power mean, than finite things and persons can be. Descartes defined "substance" as that which so exists that it needs nothing else to account for or sustain its existence: what are called "created" substances—bodies and egos to wit—are beings that need God for their beginning and continuance; they are, therefore, substances only in a secondary sense—whatever that may amount to: substance proper is that which exists in itself—self-existent reality. Spinoza, more logical than Descartes, concluded from this that substance must be One, so that whatever is finite and plural can only be illusory.

Pantheism in its protean forms pervades the intellectual and emotional history of mankind.

Pantheism, in one or other of its many protean forms, is a way of thinking about the universe that has proved its influence over millions of human minds. Looked at in one light, it seems to be Atheism; in another, sentimental or mystical Theism; in a third, Calvinism. It has governed the religious and philosophical thought of India for ages. Except in Palestine, with its intense Hebrew consciousness of a personal God, it has been characteristic of Asiatic thought. It is the religious philosophy of a moiety of the human race. In the West we find a pantheistic idea at work in different degrees of distinctness—

in the pre-Socratic schools of Greece, as in Parmenides; after Socrates, among the Stoics; then among the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria, with Plotinus in ecstatic elevation—a signal representative; again, in a striking form in Scotus Erigena, who startles us with intrepid speculation in the darkness of the ninth century, the least philosophical period in European history; yet again, with Bruno as its herald, after the renascence: and in the seventeenth century the speculative thought of Europe culminated in Spinoza's logically articulated pantheistic unity and necessity. The pantheistic conception was uncongenial to the spirit and methods of the eighteenth century, but it is at the root of much present religious and scientific speculation in Europe and America. It emerges in the superconscious intuition of Schelling: it has affinities with the absolute self-consciousness of the Hegelian: it is implied in the Absolute Will and the Unconscious Absolute of Schopenhauer and Hartmann, in Germany; and in England it has affinity with the Unknowable Power behind phenomena of Herbert Spencer.

The word Pantheism.

This philosophical form of thought is older and more widely spread than the name now appropriated to it; for the term is of modern date. The 'Pantheisticon' of John Toland, early in last century, probably brought the word into vogue in this country, although the pantheistic idea was an exotic among us until the present century. For those now called pantheists were of old called atheists, because they seemed to identify their One Substance with the universe of Immensity, or to treat it as *tertium quid* —impersonal—neither matter nor mind. On the other hand, when the universe is seen strongly in dependence on Spirit, the pantheistic language used admits of monotheistic interpretation. We find Berkeley saying in 'Siris' that "whether God be abstracted from the sensible world, and considered as distinct from and presiding over the created system; or whether the whole universe, including mind together with the mundane body, is conceived to be God, and the creatures to be partial manifestations of the divine essence,—there is no atheism in either case, whatever misconception there may be;—so long as Mind or

Intellect is understood to preside over, govern, and conduct the whole frame of things." This is not necessarily inconsistent with the existence of morally responsible persons. With this proviso it is not pantheism, either cosmic or acosmic.

Deism.

Pantheism is an ambiguous term. It is apt to be applied to theists who emphasise what distinguishes them from deists. Deism, theism, and pantheism should be distinguished. Under the gross deistical conception, what is called God is imaged as existing in a place apart—determined at a certain time to create the things and persons that have appeared—these all after creation being left by this remote Deity to supposed forces in nature—God at a distance—usually doing nothing—occasionally interfering with the natural order, by miracle or providence—a wholly transcendent and alien God—an individual among individuals, instead of the One Absolute Being.

Pantheism as opposed to Deism.

The pantheistic conception is at the opposite extreme to the deistical: God is the ever-evolving infinite Being: individuals, or Deity modified by innate necessity, could present no other appearances than those they present in nature: finite things and persons are related to God as its waves are related to the ocean, whose surface they occasionally disturb—the waves not of a finite but of infinite ocean. But as waves are always water, even so ever-changing things and persons are always God.

> In Nature see nor shell nor kernel,
> But the All in All and the Eternal.

Theism as intermediate.

Intermediate between the deistical conception of an idle God, remote from the world, occasionally interfering, and the pantheistic conception of God as Universal Being in its infinite necessities, there is the theistic conception of the universe of human experience—given as revelation—incomplete revelation—of God: God revealed in the contents of space and time, but not therein exhausted; God not so necessitated as that whatever—good or evil—enters into existence must be divinely necessitated;—

without room for moral or immoral acts of persons, or for ideals of duty, or for the rise into existence of any act that ought not to exist.

The presence of God as Active Reason pervading the universe.

The developed idea of God, as the omnipresent Life of the world, constantly operating in and through natural laws, is common to educated theism with pantheism, and is what modern theism owes to pantheistic exaggeration. It distinguishes both from the deism in which God is conceived as at a distance, leaving the ordinary evolution of the material world and society to natural law. The thought and feeling of divine immanence or omnipresence in all natural change; of the finite as pervaded by and sustained in what is infinite, comes out, in ancient and modern poetry and religion. It is the intense expression of a theism so conscious of the uniqueness and pervadingness of Deity as to refuse to think God apart,—a Person outside other persons. Hebrew literature, with its abundant representations of God as personal, still suggests the idea of God latent in the heart of universal reality. Instead of an individual and distant God, external to the cosmos, but occasionally operating in it as a disturbing God, its voice is,—"Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." And there is expressed sense of despair, apart from the all-enveloping and pervading and supporting Power: "The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Again of the voice of faith and hope: "God is not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being." So too with the thinkers and prophets of Christianity—in the early Greek Church, as Clement and Origen, and in the medieval ages of faith. This is followed by more deistical conceptions in early Protestantism, which tend to divorce nature, as wholly secular, from God as wholly supernatural. Reaction

against this finds expression in our own religious poet, who had learned—

> "To look at Nature, not as in the hour
> Of thoughtless youth;"

and was wont to feel—

> "A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
> Of Something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky—and in the mind of man."

Pantheistic dreams of Scotus Erigena.

The dreamy abstract character of pantheism is found in its protean modes of representing the relation of all that appears in space and time to the Divine Power and Substance. Is God eternally under modification; or have the modifications, called things and persons with their changes, a beginning, and will they all end; so that things and persons shall at last disappear in God, with an eternal cessation of change, time and change being illusions of sensuous imagination? So the medieval pantheist, Scotus Erigena, speculates in his philosophic dream about "Nature," or the totality of existence. In the dream all nature consists of God. The finite universe in its total evolution is a flash of light in the darkness and silence of unconscious undifferentiated Being. God is the essence of all things and persons, in which they must at last eternally and unconsciously repose. These tremendous assertions, offered without proof, illustrate the elasticity of pantheistic imagination, and its indifference to the demands of human experience. Speculation first fancies what reality must be, and then disdains all troublesome facts, which are disparaged as sensuous imaginations. Experience is treated as an illusory descent from the universal to the particular, from the abstract to the concrete. In the end, as in the beginning, all resolves into the inexperienced or the unconscious.

This much in illustration of some phases of Pantheism, when it was trying to occupy a position between Atheism

and Theism. But it is by Spinoza that the idea of pantheistic unity and necessity, as the final conception of existence, is put before us in the most systematic form, and with claims to unbroken demonstration. In Spinoza an abstract intellectual philosophy is identified with religion. He is the prince of those systematic divines who bid defiance to Bacon's warning, that "perfection or completeness in divinity is not to be sought"; that "he that will reduce a knowledge into an art or science must make it round and uniform," whereas in divine philosophy "many things must be left abrupt"—if man keeps faithful to experienced reality. Therefore philosophical thought, when it becomes theological, must, in a human understanding, become aphoristic, and can never be an exhaustive system of All, as seen at the divine centre, or *sub specie æternitatis*.

Spinoza develops pantheism in abstract demonstrations.

It is interesting to find that when we conceive the universe in the Spinozistic form of a pantheistically necessitated Unity, with finite things and persons, spaces and times, only necessitated modes, we seem to be adopting the conception under which Lord Gifford wishes the problems of Natural Theology to be investigated. And in a way I am making it my starting-point. For, in the foregoing negative criticism of Monist systems, I have found myself repelled, first from Materialism or atomism, and then from individual Egoism, on account of the inadequacy and incoherence of these attempts to reach a satisfying unity. Each of these leaves man isolated and without absolute support; for in neither is there the divine or perfect synthesis. This support Pantheism offers in excess, for it deifies everything. If we fail to find a pantheistic home we must abandon the hope of satisfying the desire for unity in strict Monist form. Pantheistic Science, Universal Nescience, and Theistic Faith are three ideals now before Europe and the world; with some educated and more half-educated thought oscillating between the first and the second. Which of these three is the most reasonable final conception—the fittest for man in the full breadth of his physical and spiritual being?

Alternatives of modern thought.

Spinozism and Lord Gifford.

As I have said, the pantheistic idea of *substantiation* of the world and the ego in One Infinite Substance, called God, is an idea that lurks in Lord Gifford's Deed of Foundation, the idea which he seems to desire to have worked out and tested through this lectureship, in some of the innumerable fruitful ways which its development might open to mankind. The idea comes out strongly in a lecture on "SUBSTANCE," delivered by him some years before his death. I make no apology for quoting some sentences from this rare and curious tract, to show how near the idea of Divine Substantiation of things and persons lay to his heart.

All things and persons as consubstantiated in God, the only Substance.

He conceives God as the one and only Substance, the one hidden reality that exists under all concrete beings, and to which all their phenomena are to be ascribed. So he tells us that the word SUBSTANCE is "the grandest word in any language." Substance is "that which is below and above and around and within" all material things, and all minds or egos; that in which they all exist; so that whatever is predicable of them must be predicable of the One Substance of which they are parts. Take the following:—

Unsubstantiality of finite things and persons.

"To come to the root and bottom of the matter at once, I ask you to look at the forces and energies and laws of nature; and the laws of life which have so much to do with the phenomena of external nature and of man which we have been examining. . . . What are these *forces* and *energies*—innate in matter forsooth, innate in protoplasm, innate in organisation—and on which so much reliance is placed? Do these forces and energies explain anything? Do they not just put the question further back, or further on? For *the* question is, What is the *substance* of all the forces and energies themselves? *They* are not final and ultimate; they themselves need explanation; there must be Something behind and beyond them all. They are not self-originated: they are not self-maintained: they are but words, telling us to go deeper and to go higher; they all seem to say to the anxious inquirer, '*Not* in us, *not* in us.' . . . The force behind and in all forces, the energy of all energies, the explanation of all explanations, the cause

of all causes and of all effects, the Soul that is within and below and behind *each* soul, the Mind that inspires and animates and thinks in *each* mind—in one word, the Substance of all substances, the Substance of all phenomena, is—God. 'Nature! 'tis but the name of an effect.' The cause is God. *Now* we have reached a Substance that does not in its turn become merely a phenomenon; a Substance which has nothing behind it, but of which all things and persons, past, present, or future, are but the *forms*. . . . *Substance* is the true name of *God*. Every line of thought meets here. Every eager question is answered here. Every difficulty and perplexity is resolved here. Here the philosopher must rest. Here the ignorant must repose. This universe and all its phenomena—other universes, unthinkable by human minds—all are but forms of the Infinite, shadows of the Substance that is One for ever. . . . There cannot be a finite energy that is due only to itself alone, and which is independent of everything else; for there can be but One Infinite. . . . It is mere repetition to say, That if God be the very Substance and Essence of every force, and of every being, He must be the very Substance and Essence of the human soul. The human soul is neither self-derived nor self-subsisting. It is but a manifestation, a phenomenon. It would vanish if it had not a substance; and its substance is God. . . . Then if God be the substance of our souls, He must also be the substance of all our thoughts and of all our actions. Thoughts and actions are not self-sustaining, self-producing, any more than worlds. They are mere manifestations, first of our souls, but next, and far more truly, of God, who is our Substance. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. We are parts of the Infinite—literally, strictly, scientifically so. A human soul, or a human thought and action, *outside of God*, would be a rival deity.

He sees all the sciences culminating in science of the One Substance.

"In all this I have not gone a single step out of my way as a student of mental science; and if I have had to speak to you of God—frankly and freely—that is only because God is *necessarily found* by all who fairly follow up the purely scientific idea of substance to its deepest roots and its highest sources. The highest science always

becomes religious—nay, religion itself. . . . Science knows no authority but the intuition of truth. If God be the substance of all forces and powers, and of all beings, He must be the *only* substance,—the only substance in this universe, or in all possible universes. This Unity of Substance is the grand truth on which the system of Spinoza is founded. 'I am, and there is none besides Me'—no being, no thing, no existence besides. I am, and nothing else is. If there could be two Substances; if anything else but God existed, anything outside God, anything of which God was not the substance,—then there would be two gods, and neither of them would be infinite. But I must forbear," he says at last, "I must forbear to trace further the *consequences* of God being *seen* as the one eternal and only Substance. The subject might be expanded into many volumes."

Scientific explication of the One Substance.

It is "expansion" into its consequences of the idea of God, as the One only Substance, with criticism of the same, in the innumerable ways in which the thought may be conceived by different minds, that Lord Gifford seems to have had before him, as that which generations of thinkers might work out, according to their respective individualities. The idea itself is an elastic one, apt to evade intellectual grasp, and while attributed by him to Spinoza, was held in fervid sentiment by Lord Gifford, probably more and other than intellectual Spinozism.

Prospective.

I will next ask you to look into the grounds and consequences of the Spinozistic conception of the universe. This will open the way from Untheistic Monism to the rationale of human faith and hope in the Universal Power.

LECTURE IV.

PANTHEISTIC UNITY AND NECESSITY: SPINOZA.

Spinoza and David Hume severally personify Pantheism and Pyrrhonism.

DAVID HUME has been called the "prince of agnostics." Spinoza is the prince of pantheists. The intellectual dimensions of "natural theology, in the widest meaning of the term," are recognised by none more than by Spinoza and Hume — at opposite extremes, — extremes which curiously approach one another in the end. Spinoza starts from the divine centre, in abstract thought; Hume from the circumference, in sensuous experience. *Deus*, as abstract *Unica Substantia*, is the criterion with the one; *homo mensura* is the regulative principle of the other— but the *homo* is only the *homo* of sensuous impressions, not the God-inspired *homo*. I do not attempt an exhaustive criticism of either Spinoza or Hume, but ask leave to follow my own course, while not forgetting these two names.

The ambiguity of Spinoza.

Spinoza is a puzzle to his interpreters. Those who have lived for years mentally in his company, seeking to think the genuine thought of this speculative genius, confess doubt about their interpretations, and their insight into the purpose of the singular recluse, who made his appearance in Holland in the seventeenth century, three months after Locke entered the world. In the age that followed his life Spinoza was regarded as an atheist and a blasphemer. In the nineteenth century he receives homage as a saint. The amiable Malebranche, Samuel Clarke, representative English philosophical theologian of his generation, the sceptical Bayle, and the cynical Voltaire,

all suppose in Spinoza an enemy of religion. By Lessing and Novalis, Goethe and Schleiermacher, he is canonised for virtue and piety. Once anathematised by Jews and Christians, this proclaimed atheist is now described as a god-intoxicated mystic. Between these extremes men oscillate in their reading of the pensive spectacle-grinder in Holland, as they see in him the logical reasoner who treats Deity as an empty abstraction, or recognise a devotee, ready in self-sacrificing spirit to lose his individuality in his divine Substance. The characteristic elasticity of pantheism may explain the contradiction. The pantheist conception is susceptible of either a materialist or an idealist development: under one light it yields intellectual atheism, and under another sentimental theism. An alien in the prevailing spirit of the eighteenth century, probably no other personage living in the preceding century has more powerfully affected theological philosophy in this generation than this solitary reasoner, who devoted the thinking part of his short life of forty-four years to meditative speculation about God. An intellectual love of God, experienced in discovery of his own identity with God, was the peace of Spinoza's life, the religion to which he sincerely aspired. It was a life of more than common simplicity, frugality, and indifference to sensuous pleasure, that this swarthy, slender, consumptive-looking youth passed through in his lonely lodging at The Hague. His very innocence and virtue, matured into invincible habit, in which the man was lost in the abstract thinker, may have blinded him to the defects of a doctrine which, when it is rigidly interpreted, overturns morality.

In Spinozism the one Divine Reality is regarded as at once infinite and finite; substance and modes.

The resigned feeling that I and all persons are having our being as mathematically differentiated modifications of One Undifferentiated Substance, seems to be the essence of Spinoza's religion. He finds himself under an intellectual obligation to acknowledge one and only one reality—indifferently named God, Nature, or *Unica Substantia*. Its attributes are infinite: the modifications which these attributes somehow assume are finite. The attributes of the Divine Substance that are known to man

are only two—infinite extension and infinite thought: God or Nature is known only in modes of extension and modes of thought.

In Spinozism individual things are illusions.

Individual things and individual persons are formed by human imagination out of these modes: neither the things nor the persons have real existence: their appearance of reality is explained by Spinoza as an illusion of imagination, which necessarily arises when modes are conceived in abstraction from the Divine Reality. Taking the metaphor of the ocean and its waves to represent the *Unica Substantia*, individual persons and things are like those waves changed into lumps of ice. Imagination deludes us in the supposition that they are more than modifications of the infinite space or the infinite thought, which exist in necessary correlation; for extension and thought are correlative phases of the One Substance. But this evolution of individuals out of the Undifferentiated Unity is truly illusion, according to Spinoza: under his supreme principle—*omnis determinatio est negatio*—the finite can be only a negation of the Infinite, not a positive reality. Nevertheless, he proceeds as if the Infinite were decomposable by abstraction, capable of being regarded alternately as Infinite and finite, Substance and modes, Undetermined yet differentiated in mathematically necessary forms.

The modes of the *Unica Substantia* reasoned about as geometrical quantities by Spinoza.

Thus the two attributes of God known to man are represented in imagination as individual things and individual persons, and endowed with an illusory reality. Things and persons may both be reasoned about geometrically; for extension and thought, being substantially identical, are necessarily correlative, so that thought and theology are philosophically unfolded in mathematical terms. They form between them the *natura naturata*, which, by a logical but not real distinction, Spinoza contrasts with the *natura naturans*. These names, instead of universe and God, express the unity and identity of the One Substance; which, as I have said, may be reasoned out in terms of geometrical quantity, seeing that extension and thought are in rational correlation. The Substance of which I find myself a mode, may be speculated either in

abstract unity or in its concrete modes,—at once infinite and finite, undifferentiated and yet under mathematical forms. God without the universe has no self-existent life of His own: *Unica Substantia* is empty substance, without attributes and therefore without meaning: *natura naturata* is a necessity of existence as much as *natura naturans*. We are living and moving and having our being in the One Divine Immensity, which contains all that can exist. The universe of finite things and persons must be as it is. There is no room for the creation by finite persons of acts which conform to ideals of duty and goodness; nor yet of evil acts which ought not to exist, and are therefore not absolutely necessitated. Reality and perfection must be one, under Spinoza's demonstrations: the *homo mensura* postulate must not interfere to arrest the inference. A conclusion of this mathematical pantheism is that there can be no contingency, even at the point of view of human philosophy;—apparent personal freedom from mathematical necessity is delusion, the issue of inadequate knowledge. So too is every conjecture about final reality which supposes that *natura naturata* is ruled by man's ideas of providential good and evil, order and disorder, or for those ends which seem desirable according to a human imagination of providence. Human desires must be regulated by the mathematical necessities of Nature, which is another name for God — not by the self-regarding interests of men. Here Spinozistic pantheism looks like atheism. In words Spinoza gives us nothing but God; yet in fact he gives us only an unmoral God, stripped of providence and purpose.

The ideas of space, time, substance, and causality, avenues towards infinite Being.

But is not this way of looking finally at the universe unlike reality as revealed in our deepest experience? When we try to assimilate the speculative thought unrolled in the abstract demonstrations of Spinoza, we are carried away from experience, which with him is only a name for finite illusion. We are summoned into that sublime idea of Infinite, which with him becomes pantheistic unity and necessity, while for others it sustains theistic faith. The Infinite, in fact, is not very far from

any one of us, for all our mental experience suggests Immensity, Eternity, Causality, and Substance. Dwell once more on this fact. These avenues to Infinite Reality, contrasted with the limits within which we find ourselves involved in nature, are not arbitrary constructions of imagination, remote from actual life. When we reflect we find intellectual tendencies, of which we cannot rid ourselves, which connect all that is presented in sense and in our inner experience with what passes understanding. Places and dates, persons and things, the changes of which persons and things are the subjects—are all found at last to have their roots among ideas which we are obliged to recognise as inevitably incomplete, or which irresistibly tend towards an inevitable *incompleteness*. We cannot rid ourselves of those ideas. The place where I am now standing, for instance, somehow involves Immensity, whose centre is everywhere, while its circumference is nowhere. The hour within which I am now writing is somehow contained within the endless or timeless Eternity. And the natural evolution of the ever-changing physical universe seems at last to merge in what is unchanging and time-transcending. Then when we try to get at the very Substance of the things and persons presented in experience, we find that we are pursuing something that evades us, in an endless yet unavoidable regress. What actually appears, we are obliged to connect with something beyond; and this something, when discovered, in its turn leads on to more still beyond; and so on in an always unsatisfied pursuit after finality in the form of Substance. "If any one," says Locke, "if any one should be asked what is the substance in which a colour that he sees inheres, or in which a weight he feels inheres, he would have nothing to say but that they inhere in the solid extended parts or atoms of which the coloured and heavy body consists; and if he were next asked in what substance this solidity and extension themselves consisted, he would find himself obliged to go again in quest of something else—like the Indian who, saying that the world was supported by a huge elephant, was asked what the elephant rested on; to which his answer was, a

great tortoise: and being further pressed to tell what supported the tortoise, replied—*something, he knew not what.*" And as with Substance, so too with Power. If it is impossible to suppose a quality existing without substance—an adjective without a substantive—it is also impossible to suppose change without a cause into which the change must be refunded: but every finite cause in its turn demands another, to explain its own entrance into existence, and that other, *if finite*, equally demands a cause out of which it has emerged;—and so the physical regress, imposed by intellectual necessity, is lost at last in the mystery of Endlessness. In short, we find ourselves inevitably dissatisfied with what is finite—with finite places in space, finite times in duration, finite substances, and finite causes. However far we go there is an intellectual obligation to go further. The universe of our experience seems to extend into infinity; for when we try to limit it, we find the limited portion still related to reality beyond.

Is Infinite Reality a quantity?

But do we think adequately of Divine reality when we think of it as a *quantity?* It cannot be a quantity, if quantity means absolutely rounded Immensity, or absolutely rounded Eternity? An indefinitely large, or an indefinitely long-continued, finite object *is* a quantity; for it has its boundary, although the boundary may be too remote for human imagination to represent. But is the Infinite Reality, towards which we are carried by finite places, durations, qualities, and changes, capable of quantitative measurement?

Finite spaces and infinite Space.

Take Space to begin with. Imagine any quantity of space you please, however vast—say the area included within the orbit of the planet on which we are living. You *can* subtract from this the total space contained say within the orbit of Mercury; you have to that extent reduced the finite area which was contained within the Earth's orbit. Or, instead of subtracting, you *can* add to the quantity of the Earth's orbit, by including all that is within the vaster expanse contained within the orbit of Mars, or of Jupiter, or of the whole solar system. In short, you can either diminish or enlarge the quantity of space with which you are dealing in those instances,

because you are dealing in all of them only with finite quantities, which are all imaginable in their nature; even if human imagination gives only an obscure image of quantities so vast or so small as to be imperfectly conceived. In this we are holding up in imagination a finite quantity of space; trying to picture a space which, because it is finite, *is* capable of being diminished or increased in extent. Not so with space, when lost in the mysterious infinity which contradicts sensuous imagination. For we are somehow *obliged* to add to *every* imaginable or finite space, however vast: we find something in our minds which forbids us to suppose that we can ever reach a space *with no space beyond:* something in our minds obliges us, too, to think of *every* finite or imaginable space, however small, as still divisible into parts smaller than itself. We are obliged to believe that the largest conceivable finite space is still incomplete; for there *must* be a larger: we cannot but suppose that the smallest is incompletely divided; for there must be a smaller. A noteworthy fact in all this is, that each addition is believed to bring us *no nearer* to the Infinite Reality than we were before we began to add, and each subtraction to carry us *no farther away* from it. The addition of the quantity of space contained within the orbit of Mars to that contained within the orbit of the Earth *is* a definite addition to a quantity; because both are finite, and consist of finite parts. But no addition of parts to parts brings one nearer to Immensity; and no subtraction carries us farther away from it. Finite spaces, large or small,—large enough to include the whole known stellar system, or small enough to defy the most powerful microscope,—these spaces are confusedly spoken of as "parts" of an Infinite which transcends relations of part and whole. We suppose as much more space beyond the largest as there is beyond the smallest quantity. Stretch imagination to the utmost,—infinite space is as much out of reach—as far short of exhaustion, as it was at first—the additions being all, as it were, irrelevant to *it.* In the light of reason, the spaces of sense and imagination, large or small, disappear in Infinite Reality.

Finite times and Eternity.

Space in this way is one avenue towards the Infinite in relation to quantity. Turn next to Duration. This is another avenue which, perhaps even more than space, brings infinity home to us all. However far back in time we make imagination travel, we are obliged to suppose a past still more remote; however far forward we look, we are obliged to suppose a yet remoter future. We can set no boundary, either in the past or in the future, to the succession of changes by which the idea of duration is awakened in human consciousness: when we imagine any period, long or short, our minds oblige us still to imagine a duration, longer or shorter, by the addition or subtraction of which the first is increased or diminished. But just as space at last disappears in Immensity, so time at last disappears in Endlessness. Unbeginning time does not admit of addition, nor does unending time admit of subtraction. The Eternity in which each is lost does not admit of parts, although sensuous imagination has to picture it as divisible. We are as far from exhausting Eternity when we have travelled back millions of years as we were when we commenced our journey into past time; and no passage of time now elapsed diminishes the endlessness that seems to be in front of us. The unbeginning past seems to misleading imagination as if it were a quantity subtracted from the unending future, it too being a supposed quantity: thought is lost in an Infinity greater than either the unbeginning past or the unending future, yet somehow containing each of the two as its parts. Add to any finite time and we are brought nearer to a yet longer finite time; but we are brought no nearer to Eternity. Time, necessarily incapable of being completed at either end, makes imagination commit suicide when it tries to exhaust Duration, in the unpicturable region in which

> "immutably survive,
> For our support, the measures and the forms
> Which an abstract intelligence supplies,
> *Whose kingdom is where time and space are not.*"

So it is that the space by which I am now surrounded,

and the time that is included within the present hour, both seem to be merged, the one in unexpanded Immensity and the other in timeless Eternity. The understanding, measuring by sense and imagination, tries to transcend itself, and in doing so is always lost at last in the Infinite Reality.

Temporal succession or change an illusion, and reality philosophically intelligible only *sub specie æternitatis*, according to Spinoza.

How to reconcile finite places with the Immensity in which place seems lost, or finite times with the Eternity in which duration seems to disappear,—the placed with the placeless, the timed or dated with the timeless,—is the mystery of an experience which, like ours, is conditioned by place and time, in a way that must always leave thought at the last under a sense of intellectual incompleteness and dissatisfaction. The pantheistic Monism of Spinoza is like a superhuman attempt to think the universe of reality, called Nature or God, at a point of view where past and future disappear—all undetermined in time,—*sub specie æternitatis*, as at the eternal centre—not in succession, but under abstract geometrical relations. It represents God as the boundless geometrical Unit, to express which in finite modes, mathematical figures, with their changeless because intellectually necessary relations, are substituted for actual succession or change, which Spinoza relegates to the illusions of finite imagination. The *Unica Substantia*, in its two infinite attributes, is really unchangeable, — undifferentiated by the misleading idea of succession. Intellect knows nothing either of temporal change or of antecedent purpose. Effects and designs are both as alien to the Spinozistic conception of the Real as they are to the abstract conceptions of geometry. They belong to illusory sensuous imagination; which with Spinoza is another name for ordinary unphilosophised experience. The universe being the absolute necessity of reason, could not be other than it is; and it is misleading fancy that supposes it a theatre of change, and of contrivances in which means are arbitrarily chosen to reach ends. Spinoza's universe, seen *sub specie æternitatis*, is as empty of cause and purpose as the multiplication-table, or the demonstrations of Euclid. The illusion of temporal and dynamical succession is exchanged for timeless statical certainty.

With Spinoza nothing really happens: all exists simultaneously.

He who tries to think out the Reality in which he lives and moves and has his being, in sympathy with Spinoza, must therefore think it out, not as imaginable succession, or physical evolution, but as unimaginable Eternity. For imagination of succession is to the reality like trees or houses as seen from the window of a carriage in motion. They seem to be moving, but the motion is in our selves. The supposition that change is real is the delusion of the uneducated. Nothing happens: all exists simultaneously. The past is not really past: the future is not still unreal. Thought is not successive: succession arises only when imagination invades the province of science. All is Now. Under the geometrical necessitated conception, history and experience logically dissolve in illusion: what has not yet happened is as real as what has happened; what is future and what is past is identified in what must be. Nothing really happens: all exists absolutely.

Two ways of conceiving quantity.

It is instructive to follow Spinoza as he sublimates finite things, fallaciously individualised by imagination, out of which the illusory world of common consciousness is supposed to emerge, but which reason refunds into the One Divine Substance in which all things exist in absolute perfection. Substance, so far as it is infinite, cannot, he argues, be added to or divided. If asked why we are apt to suppose the contrary, he would answer, that quantity may be conceived either in imagination or according to pure intellect. If we regard quantity, as it appears to imagination, we find it divisible, or made up of parts; but if we regard it intellectually, "which is difficult for us to do," it can be demonstrated that it must be indivisible.

The absurdity of contingency.

Again, the universe of reality must be eternally necessary, as otherwise we are involved in the contradiction that Nature might be different from what must be. What we call contingency and change is the issue of an imperfect comprehension of infinite reality, under the delusive form of sense or imagination. What really exists cannot be contingent: it seems so only because it is viewed in the light of deficient knowledge. Things are perfect in their reality, for what is real is divine. But even the

opinion which refers all to capricious Will is nearer truth, according to Spinoza, than the supposition that things are what they are, for the sake of any supposed good thereby secured to man, or of which man is the final cause. For this last supposes an end independent of God, or to which God is only a means.

Pantheistic explosion of the idea that the universe is charged with adaptations which relate to human interests.

The favourite prejudice that a humanly related purpose or final cause is the constitutive principle of existence is what Spinoza by his demonstrations labours to remove. Man, unphilosophically disposed to think things in succession—not *sub specie æternitatis*—takes his own finite and imaginable experience as the measure of reality, and looks at reality as event, or historically; not *sub ratione*, or intellectually. Magnifying the importance of his own feelings and desires, he supposes that the final cause of existence must be human happiness. As pleasure is the motive of his own actions, he comes to interpret Nature or God as a system of means intended to secure this for man; which involves the supposition of an anthropomorphic Ruler of Nature, endowed with a capricious freedom, disposed to act emotionally in this way or that; who does nothing in vain, that is to say who does nothing that is inconsistent with man's happiness. And when experience contradicts this human fancy, by the miseries to which men are subject, then, rather than surrender the childish hypothesis of a reality that is determined by human interests, its anthropomorphic advocates suggest man's ignorance, and conclude that the rule of the gods somehow surpasses our comprehension. This favourite refuge of narrow minds, Spinoza thinks, would have perpetually kept the human race in darkness if mathematics, which excludes regard to causes, either final or efficient, had not offered a higher criterion of truth, and made philosophers acknowledge the necessary nature of All. For a mathematical conception of the universe shows—so he argues—that God or Nature, as perfect, can be subordinated to no human end: to suppose the universe charged with purpose is a fiction of imagination, not a scientific conception. It is because in the eye of imagination the worth of things is determined

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by their human relations and utilities, that the irrational prejudices arise which are expressed by the words good and evil, vice and sin, praise and blame, order and disorder. "Good" is the term popularly applied to whatever is supposed to be in the interest of man, or, like ritual or worship, in the imagined interest of God. Ignorant of things in their rationale, men imagine an order of their own. When things are so arranged that they can be *easily* imagined, they call them well arranged, and when placed otherwise, they call them confused; as if the order were something in the things, and not in their own imagination. They suppose that God must create the universe so that *they* can easily interpret it; weakly attributing their own imagination to God, and dreaming that God has disposed all out of consideration for human imagination. Spinoza with sorrow sees human life crowded with examples of finite imagination substituted for the infinite reality of divine reason, and endless controversies as the consequence. Men imagine without truly understanding. If they truly understood things, they would be all agreed, although not necessarily pleased. The perfection of things is to be judged by what they must be, not by the ways in which they satisfy or offend men.

A pantheistic dilemma.

A dilemma confronts this pantheistic unity and necessity. Either we reduce individual things and persons to vain shadows, and then the undetermined Substance or Deity of Spinoza comes instead—a featureless unity; or we must assume that the data and rational implicates of our experience are real—so far as they go—and that God is incompletely yet really revealed in our physical and spiritual experience. For determining between these alternatives we must have recourse to facts and the final constitution of the human mind. *Homo mensura* or *nulla mensura* are the alternatives that meet us at last. It is by means of *monads*, says Leibniz, that Spinoza is refuted: Spinoza would be right if there were no *monads:* in that case all that is not God would be evanescent accident of fancy. Let us substitute persons, or moral agents, for *monads*, and say that if there were no inspired self-acting

persons, a necessitated physical universe would be the only revelation of God?

Our moral experience disrupts the pantheistic unity and necessity.

For our moral experience of remorse and responsibility is an insurmountable obstruction to pantheistic unity. Logical pantheism is inconsistent with human ideals of moral goodness, and with real evil. God must be perfect; therefore whatever and whoever exists must be perfect. Nero and Borgia, Socrates and Jesus, are alike and equally divine. Now if we find something existing which *ought not* to exist, and which has come into existence by no divine necessity, we find what disturbs Spinoza's theory. But the existence of this disturbance is witnessed to by remorse, which is as much a necessity of moral reason as physical causality is of scientific reason; and neither reason can be proved to be inconsistent with the other. We find in the universe that of which the Universal Power cannot be the origin—unless either the Universal Power is evil, or evil only one of the illusions of human imagination. Individual persons cannot be individually real, we are told, because this would be inconsistent with pantheistic definitions of substance and reality: they must be modifications of the One Substance. This may be after all only a dispute about definitions. Their responsibility implies that in point of fact persons must be treated as if they were individual: we must so treat them in our moral judgments and in our conduct: men measure men by rewards and punishments: whatever our speculative definitions may be, duty is related to men's conduct in a way that makes them responsible for what they do personally. What are called by pantheism "modifications" of "the same Substance" bear to each other moral relations, and the "modifications" differ from one another in their degrees of goodness.

Spinozistic demonstrations chiefly verbal.

While Spinoza insists upon the identity of theological with mathematical necessity, he seems to attain in much of his reasoning only to the verbal certainty that depends upon arbitrary definitions of words. He banishes efficient and final causes, change, and temporal succession, as artifices of fancy. He replaces them with names and their definitions; and the names so defined are used in demon-

strations in which the conclusions only make explicit what was already arbitrarily introduced into the definitions. The system is a logical evolution of what is contained in the connotation of certain words of extreme abstraction. And the result shows chiefly argumentative connection between dogmatically assumed definitions and conclusions. "It is possible," as has been said, "by devising a set of arbitrary definitions, to form a science which, although professedly conversant about moral, political, physical, or any other ideas, should yet be as certain as geometry. It is of no moment whether the ideas correspond with facts or not, provided they do not express absolute impossibilities, and be not inconsistent with each other. From the definitions a series of consequences may be deduced by the most unexceptionable reasoning, and the results will be perfectly analogous to mathematical propositions: but the terms true and false cannot be properly applied to them." Nominal definitions are the principles of this verbal science. The terms true and false therein refer to verbal consistency, not to correspondence with what is real.

Undifferentiated unity illusory.

That it refunds all into undifferentiated Unity, emptied of events, is an unsurmountable difficulty in this thoroughgoing Impersonalism or Pantheism. It vainly asks human intelligence to conquer the empty region towards which we are carried, when we try to surrender place for Immensity, time for Eternity, substances revealed in experience for the Eternal Substance, caused effects for the final mystery involved in Power. It demands an impersonal faculty in which the individual person must be lost in an illusory unity; and to meet this, pantheistic thinkers have been reduced to hard straits. This difficulty is met variously: by some in the hypothesis of a transcendental vision or inspiration, which can hardly be distinguished from blind feeling; by others in an avowedly emotional experience suited to the less robust intelligence and dreamy temperament of the more indolent and unpractical races of mankind. Plotinus, in the ancient world, and Schelling in this century, may be taken, each in his own way, as advocates of a transcendental intuition which

seems to resolve at last into unintelligible feeling, or to be sublimated into superconsciousness—as in the *Nirvana* of the Buddhist, weary of a perplexed and painful conscious experience. We find Plotinus asserting a claim to an ecstatic vision of the Infinite Unity—into which he is reported to have acknowledged that he had risen only four times in his life—a vision or feeling which may have realised Spinoza's indifferentiate Substance—but in a fashion which necessarily forbid any report of the ineffable result. It is told of him that in his pantheistic enthusiasm he disclaimed his own birth, looking with contempt on the contents of space, and ashamed of his appearance in subordination to measurements of time. The "ecstasy" must be an empty name for an illusory superconsciousness, from which all that human intelligence can apprehend is withdrawn. Schelling's vaunted intuition of the Undifferentiate is beset by like contradictions.

On the whole it seems impossible, under the conditions of human experience and understanding, to connect in philosophic imagination Infinite with finite; temporal succession with the Eternal Now. It is impossible, under human conditions, for scientific understanding to conquer an Infinite which refuses to enter as a rounded object into experience. It is impossible to see All as All is visible at the divine centre. The alternatives for man are *Homo mensura* or *Nulla mensura*. The former is adapted to his intellectual place in the hierarchy of existence, intermediate between Nescience and Omniscience.

LECTURE V.

FINAL SCEPTICISM: DAVID HUME.

Summary. In preceding lectures we have passed through various stages of thought regarding man's final problem. In the first stage we were inquisitive. What sort of universe is this in which I find myself living and moving and having my being? Is the Universal Power finally good or finally evil? In what sort of reality do I find myself; and what is to be the issue of the faith-venture, which—without my leave asked or given—I find myself obliged to make, in being obliged to live? The next stage was assumptive. I found myself somehow bound to take for granted that consciousness means myself; and myself, too, percipient of a world outside of me; moreover, that this inner and outer reality is unconditionally dependent upon the Universal Power called God. In the third stage I was concerned with the outside world, or with materialism in its claim to be the only interpretation of the universal reality into which I was ushered when I began to be conscious. The limitation led to the conclusion that men are only ephemeral material organisms, composed of molecules in motion, each organism conscious while the organism lasts, but its short self-conscious life only a passing incident in the universal molecular history which makes up all that exists. The fourth stage of thought through which we passed was introspective. Here we found that a universe resolved into molecular motions was not so finally satisfying to reason as it seemed at first; and that instead of the percipient ego being an issue of molecularly constituted movable

things, the real existence of molecularly constituted movable things was unintelligible without active and percipient agents. Accordingly, instead of supposing with the materialist that I am only an insignificant organism among other organisms, in a wholly outward universe, it seemed truer that outward things, including my visible organism, exist in my mental experience; or at any rate that they depend for their existence and activity on *some* percipient mind that is conscious of experience. Even Panegoism seemed to have more to say for its proposition—that the outward world is all existing in me, than Panmaterialism had for *its* proposition—that percipient life is only a physical event, in the endless history of an otherwise unconscious universe of molecules and aggregates of molecules, in motion and evolution. Still deeper reflection, however, showed the insufficiency both of this dogmatic materialism and this dogmatic egoism, by reducing each to an absurdity, and dissolving both in final doubt. Neither the molecules moving in space and time, nor the perceptions in which I was conscious of myself, I now saw, could be the last word about the universe of reality. They and I were ephemeral, not absolute, when regarded as data contingent in experience. And as nothing not absolute could be the final reality, one began to think of matter and the conscious ego as interdependent modes of Divine Being, in which they exist in undifferentiated unity; or, escaping from the geometrical conceptions of Spinoza, as transitory phenomena, evolved by inscrutable Universal Power. But after further thought the pantheistic unity seemed to dissolve under inevitable presuppositions of human life, necessary implicates of our experience, which make us unable to think that evil is good, or to see deity in disorder, virtue in crime, and truth in error. Moreover, if human experiences, disparaged as delusions, are modes of Divine Being, how can they be delusions? How can there be delusion if all is perfect or divine?

Universal Scepticism seems to be the *reductio ad absurdum* of each of the three philosophical attempts

Universal Scepticism the *reductio ad absurdum* alike of Materialism, Panegoism, and Pantheism.

to reduce to unity that triplicity which is dimly presupposed in the primary data of spontaneous faith. Universal Materialism, Panegoism, Pantheism — each so far true in what it affirms—are all challenged as incoherent expressions of human experience; or because they reach a verbal consistency through inadequate recognition of actual facts in nature and in man. In the ages materialist and egoist atheism and empiricism, as well as pantheistic necessity, reappear in new forms; for each, so far, represents what is real, and each has indirectly contributed to deeper and truer insight. It is probable that for some minds each may be found satisfying in the future as in the past. But each, when boldly thought out, leads to Pyrrhonism or total doubt.

Nescience or Total Scepticism.

Final Nescience—doubt about everything—and the mental paralysis involved in this—is accordingly the next condition of mind we have to enter into. Is it not the refutation of all the three Monist systems, because it is their inevitable issue? And must we in the end subside into the impotence of total scepticism, or is there still another attitude possible for man as regards the final meaning of his life?

Is the final problem of human life in every way insoluble?

Sceptical negation meantime succeeds to the Monist systems which, after trial, we have been obliged to reject as inadequate and incoherent. The inquisitive mood in which we started would now seem to be fruitless. A point of interrogation becomes the symbol of human life, in relation to the ego, the outside universe, and God. I cannot tell what sort of universe this may be into which I have been ushered. Its physical sequences even may all be untrustworthy, and therefore uninterpretable. Passing appearances may or may not be the issue of innumerable molecules in motion: they may or may not be only states of the one conscious ego, terms of my changing life: the outward world and the conscious self may or may not be only modes of the One Substance. The final reality is hid beneath both the molecular and the conscious appearances—concealed rather than revealed by them; for is not this what the pantheistic phase of thought about the universe in the end amounts to? I find no issue other

than total nescience for abstract pantheistic reasoning, or for pantheistic feeling of Infinite. If neither reasoned nor emotional pantheism gives an adequate self-consistent account of experience and its implicates, it leaves me finally in doubt. Whether there is or is not morally trustworthy Power at the centre of existence now appears to be a question less capable of being brought to an issue than the question about a plurality of inhabited worlds. Whether the Universal Power is personal seems more indeterminable than the question about the existence of persons in other planets. Improved experimental apparatus may some day bring one or more of the planets so within human experience that men can determine whether or not it is the scene of an intelligent population; wider experience can never relieve the final incomprehensibility of the infinite universe in which men awaken into consciousness, if it is an incomprehensibility that is imposed by the very constitution of a human knowledge of the concrete universe. The supposition is self-contradictory, that man can reach the Divine centre of the All, so as to have infinite reality within his intellectual vision, and then find—on this condition only—what the Universal Power is, and whether trustworthy, and ours therefore a trustworthy intelligence. Paralysed thought withdraws the final problem altogether, as the suggestion of obstinate unreflecting delusion.

Agnosticism.

To look at the universe thus is, according to a common expression, to look at it agnostically. This agnosticism expresses a final conception of life that has returned into fashion in the nineteenth century. "When I reached intellectual maturity," Huxley tells us, "I began to ask myself whether I was an atheist, a theist, or a pantheist. I found, when I put this question to myself, that the more I reflected, the less ready was the answer. At last I came to the conclusion that I had neither lot nor part with any of these denominations, *except the last.* The one thing in which most of these good people were agreed was the one thing in which I differed from them. They were quite sure that they *had* attained a certain Gnosis—had,

more or less successfully, *solved* the problem of existence: while I was quite sure I had not, and had a pretty strong conviction that the problem was insoluble. And with Hume and Kant on my side, I could not think myself presumptuous in holding fast by that opinion. So I took thought, and invented what I conceived to be the appropriate title of *agnostic*. It came into my head as suggestively antithetic to the *gnostic* of church history, who professed to know so much about the very things of which I was ignorant." Agnosticism is otherwise described, by the inventor of the name, as a method of attaining knowledge, rather than a state of ignorance about the foundation of human life and the universe. It is a method, we are told, "the essence of which lies in the application of a single principle, which is the fundamental axiom of modern science. Positively this principle may be thus expressed:—In matters of the intellect, follow your reason as far as it will take you, without regard to any other consideration. And negatively:—In matters of the intellect, do not pretend that conclusions are certain which are not demonstrated or demonstrable." Agnosticism, according to this account, is a term invented to express dutiful submission of belief to the limits imposed by evidence—rejection of all assertions and denials that are inconsistent with intellectual integrity.

Agnosticism sometimes a question-begging term.

It is difficult to see how intellectual integrity can be assumed as the distinctive mark of total agnosticism without question-begging. In the present case the very point in dispute is, whether *any* assertion about the foundation and purpose of human life *is* reasonable. That many unreasonable assumptions and conclusions, positive and negative, about the sort of universe we are born into, its principle or want of principle, its moral purpose or want of purpose, have more or less prevailed, is a superfluous truth. But it still remains for proof that all assertions of this sort must be unreasonable. To assume this at the outset, in a question-begging definition, is to determine a matter of fact, not by proof, but by an arbitrary assumption.

Fallacies of dogmatic theologians.

It is of course true that professedly theistic conceptions of the universe have given birth to fallacious reasoning. Theologians have raised metaphysical arguments, in which disputed facts were determined by logical manipulation of abstract propositions; or conclusions have been the outcome of irrelevant facts. Nay, without even the semblance of an appeal to reason, theism has been sustained by a traditional reverence for books accepted as infallible, or for the dogmas of an ecclesiastical society which claims infallibility. In this the final appeal to reason in experience may be evaded. Abstract propositions cannot show us concrete fact: at the most they can show what must be fact, in case conditions are fulfilled of which only experience can inform us. So it is argued by the agnostic that books are worthless when they tell what can never come within the range of human experience. No man can ever actually see or hear God; or see those who saw Him, or who heard His voice. Tradition reports the occasional occurrence of physical miracles; and adaptations of means to ends in animal organisms are familiar to us. But how can man know *enough* about the ultimate constitution of the universe, and the powers that may be at work in it, to justify him in concluding that the reported signs and wonders must be understood to mean interference for a purpose by the Universal Power? And as for Paley and the divinely constructed organisms, we now know enough about the natural history of cosmical change to justify the conclusion that elaborate organisms are the gradual issue of natural law; so that divine interference to produce them seems superfluous. It is unnecessary, the agnostic would say, to *prove* the *constant absence* of supernatural interference; the proof of a negative is difficult: it is enough that there is no proof of more than natural sequence; the admission of more without reason is unreasonable. Least of all can the burden of human life be rested on the dogma that what is good for man must therefore be true; nor can a belief be reasonably adopted only because it relieves desires and aspirations of the believer; or because its reception promises to make its recipients happier. To make the

wishes of men a test of the reality of what they wish for, is to reverse the method of science, and to substitute indulgence in agreeable anticipation for intellectual insight. Unexplained human feelings are not revelations of God.

The scientific dogma that man must for ever remain ignorant of God reverses the teaching of Bacon, Descartes, and Locke.

Modern Agnosticism, which *knows* that man must for ever find the foundation of his life and experience an insoluble mystery, is in curious contrast with the certainty that was claimed for God by the illustrious spokesmen of philosophy in the early period of modern philosophical revival. I hope that to refer to them here is not an unreasonable recognition of authority. According to Bacon, for example, "depth in philosophy alone bringeth men's minds to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate, and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity." Then hear Descartes: "With respect to God, if I were not preoccupied by prejudices, and my thought beset on all sides by the continual presence of images of sensible objects, I should know nothing sooner nor more easily than the fact of God's existence. For is there any truth more clear than the existence of the Supreme Being, or God, seeing that it is to God alone that existence necessarily and eternally pertains? But although the right conception of this truth has cost me much close thinking, nevertheless now I feel not only as assured of it as of what I deem most certain, but I find further that the certitude of all other truths is so absolutely dependent on this one, that without the knowledge of God it would be impossible ever to know anything. . . . For, if I do not first know that there is a God, I may have been so constituted as to be deceived by my faculties, and this even in matters which I apprehend with the greatest seeming evidence and certitude; especially when I recollect that I have frequently judged things to be true which other reasons afterwards constrained me to regard as wholly false. . . . I now clearly see that the certitude and truth of all science depends on knowledge of God and on that alone; so that before I knew God I could have no

proper knowledge of anything. But now that I know God, I have the means of acquiring knowledge of innumerable other matters, as well relative to God as to corporeal nature." Next take Locke: "We cannot be in want of a clear proof of God as long as we carry *ourselves* about us. . . . It is plain to me we have a more certain knowledge of the existence of a God than of anything our senses have not immediately discovered to us. Nay, I presume I may say that we more certainly know there is a God than that there is anything else without us. But though this be the most obvious truth that reason discovers, and though its evidence be (if I mistake not) equal to mathematical certainty, yet it requires thought and attention; or else we shall be as uncertain and ignorant of this as of other propositions which are in themselves capable of clear demonstration." So far Bacon, Descartes, and Locke, three early leaders of modern thought. How comes it that what they, in the seventeenth century, regarded as self-evident, or as mathematically certain, should in the nineteenth century be judged by speculating physicists to be wholly and for ever incognisable?

Agnosticism boldly claims descent from Locke and Kant, as well as Hume.

The history of European thought in the interval goes far to explain the revolution through which what was accepted as the supreme certainty by the intellectual leaders of the seventeenth century has become the supreme uncertainty of physical theorists who aspire to lead human thought in the nineteenth. Huxley argues that with "Hume and Kant," the great authorities of the eighteenth century, presenting themselves as advocates of the insolubility of the final problem of the universe, it cannot be "presumptuous" in us to hold fast by this opinion. He thinks "agnosticism" is only a new name for the philosophy of Hume and Kant; and that their philosophy has determined the limits within which our knowledge of the universe must be confined. Their message he reports to be—that men can know reality only so far as they have actual experience: without experience knowledge is only empty abstraction. Except so far as our three primary data — outward things, the ego, and God—are explained in experience, no positive assertions

regarding any of them can be made: our assertions must be all negative.

The Kantian Philosophy as a whole not agnostic.

Kant is associated with Hume by Huxley as one of two original leaders of agnosticism. This is on account of Kant's theory of causality, and his application of it to old-fashioned natural theology. But Kant's negation of theological knowledge, as what transcends understanding, does not necessarily mean practical negation of the moral and religious conception of the universe. This would imply that his total thought was not consistent with itself—that his second Critique was a vain attempt to restore what he had destroyed in his first. But the arguments in the first Critique against a theological solution of existence through purely rational construction of our sensuous experience, neither demonstrate nor disprove God; they do not foreclose the practical argument from man's moral experience in the second Critique, which contains the complementary issue of Kantian criticism. Hume, not Kant, is the prime leader of modern agnosticism. It is thus formulated by Hume: —"When you go one step *beyond the mundane system*, you only excite an inquisitive humour, which it is impossible ever to satisfy." But Hume sees that this agnosticism, when fully thought out, involves *total* nescience, not merely theological ignorance.

The Pyrrhonism of Hume is scientific agnosticism, fully thought out.

In truth the negative revolution which was proposed by Hume, in his juvenile 'Treatise of Human Nature,' is more bold and thorough than the scientific agnosticism of Huxley, which claims him as its parent: it involves the complete dissolution of common knowledge and science, not of theology alone. It issues in the Pyrrhonism which leaves men impotent, motionless, speechless; or if expressed in speech, it must be speech in the form of a question, never in the form of a proposition, either affirmative or negative, on any matter whatever. The "Que sais-je?" with the even balance as its symbol, which Montaigne adopted to express the hopeless universality of human doubt or ignorance, represents all that Hume found in sensuous experience, when emptied of

its rational implicates. The only philosophically possible sort of intellectual life for man, according to Hume, would be a life of question-putting — with no answers about anything. Experience consists—if it can be spoken of as "consistence"—not of what is substantial, but of isolated appearances. We have no experience of a persistent, dependent material world; we have no experience of independent personality; we have no experience of the Universal Power at the heart of the whole. All at the most is a succession of empty shows, too insignificant to be worth fighting about, so that martyrs of all sorts are madmen. The essence of wisdom, as also with Montaigne, is to oscillate, to doubt, to inquire, to feel sure of nothing, to make one's self responsible for nothing. If sensation is for us the measure of the universe, what is called experience can be only the sensation of the moment. What is not actually felt cannot be a part of experience. And this rope of sand, without links of reason, is worthless, whenever any assertions are made regarding the past, the distant, or the future, equally as when assertions are made about God. If belief must be confined within the transitory actual feeling of the moment; if momentary feeling, under this stringent limitation, cannot be interpreted as the sign of aught beyond itself, the only possible expression of intelligence must be transitory interrogation. All assertion about what is outside present feeling must be unproved assertion. Intellect can at the most only have strength enough to extinguish itself.

Hume himself finds, in the common sense, what arrests scepticism.

But Hume seems occasionally to approach the spiritual counteractive to this intellectual suicide. An intense view of the hollowness of the knowledge that is measured by the isolated impression of the moment, at first disposed him "to reject all belief and reasoning," so that he "could look upon no opinion as more probable or likely than another." "Where am I, or what am I?" he asks. "From what cause do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? Whose favour shall I court, and whose anger must I dread? What beings surround me? and on whom have I any influence, or who has any influence on me? I am confounded with

all these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, utterly deprived of the use of every member and faculty." But if "experience" in its narrowest meaning, when made the sole criterion of reality, brought him to this pass, "experience" in a wider meaning, including felt moral implicates of experience, carried him, he confesses, out of his "philosophical melancholy and delirium." It is indeed impossible for a human being to subside practically into Pyrrhonism, or inability to assert anything about anything. There is the "secret force" in human nature of which Pascal speaks, which sustains the weakness of finite experience and understanding. The sceptic who declines to interpret any phenomenon, or to make any exertion, because he is not omniscient, must cease to live. Total scepticism, as has been said, can never be more than an intellectual amusement: its only serious effect consists in exercising acuteness, and in humbling dogmatism: no human mind can rest in it: by virtually making *all* the foundations of reasoning and conduct equally insecure, it leaves all opinions in the same degree of certainty or probability, relatively to each other, in which they were before. Hume himself occasionally saw, in the venture of moral faith, the sort of extrication from universal doubt that is available for a finite intelligence.

In all inferences about the absent from the present, a step must be taken which is not a logical consequence.

It is instructive to trace the steps which Hume followed in his proposed "solution of sceptical doubts." It reminds one of Pascal. Those who pretend to doubt everything are confounded by natural faith: dogmatists who claim infallibility are confounded by sceptical criticism. The finite understanding of man, incapable of comprehending the infinity of existence, Hume finds nevertheless "carried by custom" to believe in objects and events that "lie beyond the present testimony of our senses and the records of our memory." In all human reasonings from experience, he sees that a step is taken in faith, unsupported by any argument of the understanding; yet sanctioned by reason as a step that is reasonable. Although not determined by argument to take the step, one is induced by

"another principle of equal weight and authority." All "inferences from experience" are found to be examples of *trust* in the constancy of uniformities that are customary. On this unproved trust or faith, he accordingly reconstitutes the experience which his sceptical criticisms had discredited. We are somehow obliged, he seems to say, to put moral trust in the universe, when it addresses us in well-tried uniformities, confident that intelligence will not be put to confusion by the issue. Now faith in the laws of nature is unconscious faith in God omnipresent in nature. It is in this moral reliance on the surroundings amidst which we live and move and have our being that men are able to transcend their momentary perceptions, and to bring into a large or scientific experience what is not actually present to their senses. All expectation is rooted in faith: we cannot demonstrate its presupposition. Without faith-venture we could not live; and in the circumstances of man, this faith is reasonable, unless its absurdity can be demonstrated. It is "an operation of the soul" which responds to the fact of order in nature. It is as unavoidable as it is to feel the passion of love when we receive benefits, or hatred when we meet with injuries. In all these operations alike, Hume sees what he calls "a species of natural instinct," which human reasoning is unable either to produce or to destroy.

All scientific inferences about matters of fact are ultimately expressions of faith in the trustworthiness of the Universal Power.

Hume even suggests a superior faith under which faith in natural law arises in the minds of men. This faith he describes as a feeling of trust in nature, which can be understood only by our being conscious of it. "Were we to attempt a definition of this belief or faith, we should perhaps find it an impossible task; in the same manner as if we should endeavour to define the feeling of cold, or the passion of anger, to a creature who never had any experience of these sentiments. Every man is every moment conscious of the sentiment represented by it. It is that act of the mind which renders realities, or what is taken for reality, more present to us than fictions; causes them to weigh more in the thought, and gives them a superior influence on the passions and imagination. Belief consists not in the peculiar nature or order of ideas,

but in the manner of their conception, and in their peculiar feeling to the mind. It is impossible perfectly to explain this feeling. We can go no further than assert that belief in reality is something so felt by the mind as to distinguish ideas of the judgment from mere fictions of the imagination. It gives them weight and influence; enforces them in the mind, and renders them the governing principles of our actions." So it is that faith in the divine trustworthiness of the universe is an implicate of the assurance that real events outside our fancies follow one another in steady order. The past prevalence of natural order awakens faith in the continuance of natural order—that is to say, in the reasonableness or interpretability of nature. But whatever the occasion of the rise of this faith may be, the matter of chief concern is,—that the faith *does naturally arise*, and that the expectation which it involves finds a response in what happens in nature. The universe is (so far) comprehended, when it is found in fact to correspond to the previsive judgments of man: man and his universe exist in an established intelligible harmony. Is not this interpretability of nature another expression for its innate divinity—its final supernaturalness? It is the initial venture of dependence on the Universal Power, herein no longer unknown, but *so far and thus revealed*, in a real revelation of what in its divine infinity passes knowledge. One can almost read this within the lines even in Hume.

They presuppose a harmony between our thoughts and the course of nature; so that all scientific proof is by implication theistic faith.

In the "correspondence" that appears between this inevitable faith or trust in natural order and the issues of that order, Hume sees "a kind of pre-established harmony." It is a "harmony between nature and our ideas: though the powers and forces by which the universe is governed be otherwise wholly unknown to us, yet so far our thoughts and conceptions may proceed in the same train with nature. *Custom* is the law under which this correspondence has been effected. Had not the presence of an object excited in us the idea of the objects commonly conjoined with it in nature, all human knowledge must have been limited to the narrow sphere of our

memory; and we should never have been able to adjust means to ends, or employ our natural powers, either to the producing of good or avoiding of evil." That a universal purpose, as well as a universal order, is tacitly acknowledged in our natural trust, Hume accordingly suggests. "Those who delight in the discovery and contemplation of *final* causes have ample subject to employ their wonder and admiration," in contemplating the harmony between our scientific expectations and the course of things. For the "*wisdom* of nature" has implanted in us an instinctive faith, "which carries forward our thought in a correspondent course to that which she has established among external objects."

David Hume and Herbert Spencer.

The three primary data are virtually implied—each in a thin attenuated form—in these notable words of Hume. "Self" and "outward things" are distinguished, yet in established harmony with each other; and withal order and purpose, embodied in the whole, but with ignorance otherwise of the Power to which the order and purpose are due. The Universal Power is credited with "wisdom," because wisdom is manifested in the existence of the harmony; yet, as with Herbert Spencer, "the Power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable." But one may ask, How and why "utterly" inscrutable, when "wisdom" is latent in its manifestations? Its manifestations must not be spoken of as if they concealed the Power, when they are in fact its revelation and embodiment. Is not the opposite assumption the issue of a narrow conception of the *homo mensura* principle? The revolution in the method of finally interpreting existence for which Hume claims credit is substitution of a concrete *homo mensura* for the abstract *Divina Mensura* principle of Spinoza. But by Hume only a sensuous *homo* is taken into the account, with the result, as Carlyle severely puts it, that to him life and the universe "was little more than a foolish Bartholomew Fair show-booth, with the foolish crowding and elbowings of which it was not worth while to quarrel, the whole would break up and be at liberty so soon."

In David Hume, the gentle benevolence which charmed

Hume's reason for regarding religious emotion as irrational.

his friends, and which Henry Mackenzie has pathetically illustrated in the story of 'La Roche,' was united to a temperament to which religious emotion was by his own account foreign. Warm in friendship, he was indifferent in religion, with an inveterate dislike to every sort of enthusiasm, founded on the narrow rationalism of a philosophy measured by sense. We see this in his objections to adoration and prayer, and to "everything we commonly call religion—except the practice of morality, and the assent of the understanding to the proposition that *God exists*. It must be acknowledged," he adds, "that nature has given us a strong passion of admiration for whatever is excellent, and that the Deity possesses these attributes in the highest perfection; and yet I assert that God is not the natural object of any passion or affection. He is no object either of the senses or imagination, and very little of the understanding; without which it is impossible to excite any affection. And, indeed, I am afraid that all enthusiasts mightily deceive themselves. Hope and fear perhaps agitate their breasts when they think of the Deity; or they degrade him into a resemblance with themselves, and by that means render him more comprehensible. Such an affection cannot be required of any man as his duty. Neither the turbulent passions nor the calm affections can operate without the assistance of the senses and imagination; or at least a more complete knowledge of the object than we have of the Deity. In most men this is the case; and a natural infirmity can never be a crime."

Hume's difficulty about theism.

This recognition of "natural infirmity" as non-moral is a sort of tacit acknowledgment that the ground of moral responsibility lies in supernatural freedom. But apart from this, of which more afterwards, this argument for the impossibility of religious emotion "in most men" is interesting, when taken in connection with the sympathy which Hume avows for the position of Cleanthes, one of the three interlocutors in the 'Dialogues on Natural Religion.' It is Cleanthes who takes the part of reasoning himself into belief in an omnipotent and all-wise God, as the supreme principle in existence, by an induction

from human experience of order and mechanism in the world. To Cleanthes, "the most agreeable reflection which it is possible for human imagination to suggest is that of genuine theism; which represents men as the workmanship of a Being perfectly good, wise, and powerful, who, having implanted in us immeasurable desires of good, will prolong our existence to all eternity in order to satisfy these desires." Hume elsewhere expresses sympathy with this conclusion, combined with some hesitation to receive it as truth, on account of the absence of adequate verification. "I could wish," he remarks in one of his letters,—"I could wish that Cleanthes's argument could be so analysed as to be rendered quite formal and regular. The propensity of the mind towards it—*unless that propensity were as strong and universal as that to believe in our senses*—will still, I am afraid, be esteemed as suspicious foundation. 'Tis here I wish for your assistance: we must endeavour to prove that this propensity is somewhat different from our inclination to find our own figures in the clouds, our faces in the moon, our passions and sentiments even in inanimate matter. For these last may and ought to be controlled, and can never be legitimate ground of assent, or foundations of reasoning."

The limit of human experience, according to Hume.

The legitimacy of an extension of "experience" which recognises in it the moral and religious presuppositions by which it is constituted, is involved in the issue with modern agnosticism, and it is interesting to find this face to face with Hume. It is difficult to determine what his final opinion was, if indeed he had a settled opinion, or how far below the thin surface of sense he meant to go. That Intelligence is supreme in the universe, however little this Intelligence can be an object of human sentiment, was sometimes strongly maintained by him. "The whole frame of nature," he asserts in his 'Natural History of Religion,' "bespeaks an intelligent Author; and no rational inquirer can, after serious reflection, suspend his belief for a moment with regard to the primary principles of genuine theism." Perhaps the key may be found in a remark he made to his friend Boyle,

who told him it was reported that he had "thrown off the principles of religion." To which the good David replied: "Though I throw out my speculations to entertain the learned and metaphysical world, yet I do not think so differently from the rest of the world as you imagine." But this about Hume personally is by the way. I return to agnosticism.

Is the religious "leap in the dark" less rational than the "leap in the dark" which must be taken in physical science?

The scientific agnostic is ready to take the inductive "leap in the dark," with faith in a natural order assumed to be present in his sense surroundings: the leap is essentially an act of faith, not the conclusion of a logical reasoning emptied of all trust and sense of mystery. Is he not in like manner required, under pressure of a spiritual faith, involved in ideal man, but which remains dormant in many, to accept as reasonable that deeper interpretation of the universe which sees in it the hyperphysical manifestation of moral purpose? That to do so is fallacious, "because it substitutes faith for reasoning," cannot *per se* be pleaded in arrest of this further leap in imperfect divine light. For every step in the physical interpretation of the world equally involves the substitution of indemonstrable *trust* for complete *insight*. Boasted inductive verification in natural science is finally an act of faith, not of reasoning: we cannot demonstrate that what has happened a million times *must* happen again, even under what may seem to us similar conditions. The incoherent agnosticism that retains physical science is not really a protest against faith; it is only an arrest of faith at the point at which faith advances from a narrower to a larger interpretation of life and the universe. Is the arrest of faith *at this point* justified by reason? I must try to answer this question in what follows, in which the religious conception of the universe, gradually developed in Theistic Faith, is offered, instead of either Monist speculation or Agnostic despair, as the final philosophy for man.

SECOND PART

FINAL REASON IN THEISTIC FAITH

LECTURE I.

GOD LATENT IN NATURE.

We have found David Hume emerging out of universal doubt, not by reasoning, but through what implies faith in final harmony between human nature and the succession of events in external nature. Without faith in this, human beings could not adjust means to ends, or use their natural powers in procuring any good or avoiding any evil. This harmony, even Hume seems to say, wears the aspect of what, according to analogies, we should call a wise arrangement. The course of nature, or the temporal succession, in the midst of which we find ourselves, and in which we take our respective parts, looks, so far, like constant adaptation to man.

David Hume's faith in an established harmony between external nature and human nature.

May we refer this harmonious correlation between the material world and the mind of man to persisting purpose in the Universal Power? And if so, must we also suppose that the natural evolution, with its providential order, had an absolute beginning in time? Have we evidence that there ever was a period in which there was no cosmos—no moral agents—no procedure of natural evolution, including cycles of integration and dissolution? Must we believe that when there was no cosmos, the Providential Power existed, unrevealed in any form of natural manifestation; and that at a particular date orderly nature was ushered into existence by a sudden creative act? And if there has ever been a time in which there was neither cosmical construction nor cosmical dissolution going on as now, did there then exist

How to explain this harmony.

the stuff or material out of which the ordering and designing Power afterwards fashioned the cosmos, and set its evolutions agoing—matter charged with "powers" which enable the sequences and their cycles and crises to persist, *per se*, without "interference"? Or was the cosmos, within which men have their experience, originated without pre-existing material in primordial chaos, coming, according to the theological formula, "out of nothing," not out of chaotic material. Yet again, is there a more reasonable supposition than either of these two, namely, that cosmical construction and disintegration has been going on *always*—that it is an unbeginning succession, and may be expected to be endless? May not the Universe in which I now find myself, in the deepest interpretation which I can put upon my experience, be just this unbeginning and unending succession of orderly, and therefore interpretable, changes, amidst which I am living and moving and having my being? May not this eternal evolution be the fact?

One faith is accepted, and another faith is rejected, by the scientific agnostic.

Questions of this sort, charged with infinity, the agnostic naturalist puts aside as unanswerable and unpractical. He does so on the ground that answers to them must be answers that come from a faith which must be irrational, because it does not admit of being verified by visible facts; whereas, on the contrary, answers to questions about the visible causes of events *within* the natural evolution are accepted in a faith that is enlightened and made precise by this sort of verification. But if undemonstrable faith in natural order is nevertheless reasonable, why must teleological interpretation of nature be rejected, on the ground that *its* only support is undemonstrable faith? The scientific trust in cosmical order, on which all inductive verification depends, cannot itself be proved by experience, because no scientific interpretation of experience is possible unless this faith is presupposed without proof. Religious trust in providential activity for ever at work throughout the evolving universe, as well as in the small portion of it which forms human experience, seems to stand, so far, on the same footing. If it is reasonable to *assume* constant natural order as

the constructive principle in the interpretation of sensuous experience, why is it unreasonable to *assume* that physical causation is also divine providential agency, if the facts consist with the deeper assumption? Order means reason, and reason means for man conscious reason and intending will. The circumstance that we bring the idea of adaptation to facts, to enable us to interpret them, instead of receiving it as a logical conclusion, seems to be no more a reason for arresting fully religious faith in God than for arresting faith in God as omnipresent physical order.

Is there any proof that the cosmos of things and persons ever had a beginning?

Further. The assumption that I am living in a cosmos, and in a cosmos charged with providential purpose, does not settle the historical question of the origin and outcome of the succession of things and persons in course of natural evolution. I do not find that the presence of order and design within the cosmos means that the cosmos must have had a beginning. That the universe should exist without either a beginning or an end of its orderly metamorphoses, does not seem less consistent with the ideas of theism and providence, than the hypothesis of its sudden creation in time—whatever that may mean. Those who assert that it had a beginning, and will have an end, must prove, and not assert. They are bound to produce evidence of what, if true, would be a historical fact. Now, historical proof that cosmical order and purpose were long ago manifested for the first time is not only difficult to find, but seems to involve a contradiction.

An unbeginning and unending cosmos may be for ever and morally providential.

What is the evidence that the natural universe had a beginning? How does it appear that the providential succession of physical sequences, with their periodical cycles of construction and disintegration, originated, at a particular date, in a Mind that had no beginning, but that existed before this date without making any cosmical manifestation of itself? What proof is there that the universe made a first appearance as a sudden supernatural effect, and that it may not be the unbeginning and endless issue of constant divine agency? May not the unbeginning past have been the scene of an endless

series of ordered evolutions and dissolutions—successive cycles or economies—in which the existing material has been undergoing periodic natural revolutions; and that human beings are living, here and now, in one of these cycles, which had *its* natural beginning in a remote past, and is destined naturally to pass into another economy in a remote future? May not this eternal natural succession be essentially divine, and be conceived of as the unbeginning and unending revelation of constant intending Will? Is not this a more reasonable hypothesis than that of sudden creation, which seems to mean that the universe, or the natural course of evolution, was once non-existent, and entered into existence as the effect of the Will of a God existing antecedently in unbeginning solitude? Moreover, if the universe must be refunded, at a particular period, into the Universal Power, does not this logic demand an antecedent cause of the solitary Mind, thus inferred only under the ordinary postulate of natural causation?

A question put by David Hume.

A question like this was raised, as we saw, by Hume. Human persons, so far as natural science and history inform us, made their appearance in the universe at a comparatively late date,—in rude forms of human life on this planet. This, we are told, was preceded by ages of sentient organisms, and before that there was only insentient matter. It is therefore with a *material world only* that we have to do, in the earlier stages—if we confine our regard to the cosmical economy of which man has authentic records, either documentary or in the form of geological and astronomical phenomena. Hume suggests that, for aught we can know *a priori*, matter may originally contain within itself the spring of order, as probably as mind does; and that there is no more difficulty in conceiving that the several elements or molecules of matter may in this way assume the most exquisite construction, than to conceive that ideas in a supposed Eternal Mind have fallen into the arrangement which forms the succession of ideas that constitute the mind of God. If the material world was really caused by a pre-existing mental world, or Eternal Mind, this

mental world must in its turn rise out of a still preceding cause; and so on regressively without end. It were better, therefore, the sceptic suggests, never to look beyond the perceived material world, and to suppose only its natural succession of unbeginning and unending changes. By supposing Matter to contain the principle of order within itself, we really assert *it* to be God; and the sooner we arrive at that Divine Being so much the better. A mental world, or universe of Mind, requires a preceding cause as much as does a material world, or universe of visible and tangible objects. So that, if merely natural or caused causality is taken as the only real causation; and if this requires us to presuppose Mind as the natural cause of the material world; the same principle of natural causality seems to require some antecedent to account for the ideas that constitute Mind.

Alleged "proof" that the cosmos had a beginning.

In reply it has been suggested, that there *is* evidence in history that the universe *was* created "out of nothing," at a particular time, but there is no such evidence that its creating Mind had also a beginning. This argument is pressed by Dr Chalmers, in his interesting and eloquent book on Natural Theology. "The precise difference between the two," he says, "is, that we *have proof* of a commencement to our present *material* economy, but we have *no proof* of a commencement to the *mental* economy —the Divine Mind—which preceded it. There is room for the question, How came the *material* system of things into its present order? because we have reason to believe that *it* has not subsisted in that order from eternity. There is no such room for the question, Why might not the material have fallen into its present order of itself, as well as the mental order which is conceived to have gone before it in the form of a Divine Mind? For we have no reason to believe that this mental economy ever was otherwise than it now is. The latter question presumes that the mental did begin to enter into order of itself, or, which is the same thing, that God had a commencement. In the material economy, we have the vestiges before our eyes of *its* having had an origin—or in other words, of its being a consequent; and we

have furthermore the experience that in every instance which comes under full observation of a similar consequent—that is, of a consequent which involves, as the mundane order of things does so amply, the adaptation of parts to an end—the antecedent was a purposing mind, which descried the end, and devised the means for its accomplishment. We might not have been called upon to make even a single ascent in the path of causation, had the world stood forth to view in the character or aspect of *immutability*. But, instead of this, both history and observation of nature tell of a definite commencement to the present order; and we therefore just follow the lights of experience when we move upward from the world to an intelligent mind that ordained it. It is this which carries us backward from the world to God; and the reason why we do not continue the retrogression *beyond God* is—that we have not met with an indication that He has had a commencement. In the one case there is a beginning of the present material system forced upon our convictions by evidence. In the other case, the case of the antecedent Mind, there is no such beginning forced upon our convictions by experience. We have therefore ample reason for regarding the world as a posterior term, and seeking after *its* antecedent. But we have no such reason for treating this antecedent as also a posterior term, and seeking for *its* prior term in a higher antecedent. The one we *see* to be a changeable and a recent world. The other, for aught we know, may be an unchangeable and everlasting God. The one order, the material, we know not to have been from everlasting. The other, the mental, which by all experience and analogy must have preceded the material, be[illegible]no symptoms which we can discover of its ever having required any remoter economy to call it into being."

A "catastrophe" may itself be a natural sequence, not a sudden creation.

What is thus supposed to be proved, by historical records contained in Hebrew and other literatures, and by physical vestiges recognised in geology, seems to be only this—that the metamorphoses which this planet of ours has passed through include what are called *catastrophes*. It is assumed, moreover, that these catastrophes

can be explained only by divine "interference," particularly where part of the issue is living matter, and, above all, organisms which manifest self-conscious life. An economy into which life has *for the first time* entered, is supposed to need divine *interference* with the divine natural order. But the antecedent creative Mind is assumed to be Mind that had no beginning: inasmuch as our records afford no evidence that the Mind which suddenly created matter, and introduced life on this globe, was itself an effect.

Historical evidence of the non-eternity of the cosmos inadequate.

This argument fails to touch important previous questions, regarding legitimate theological inference from facts of experience, and the *sort* of causation of which all physically scientific inference is the interpretation. In the first place, it leaves the spiritual activity of providential Mind in nature so far an open question that it has to be determined by documentary records of what has happened, instead of being accepted in the inevitable faith, which *when awakened* enables man to interpret his surroundings more deeply than faith in physical uniformity *taken alone* does. The eternal omnipresence of God in nature is instead reduced to a contingency, dependent on records of history, and accidents of observation, like the existence of any finite cause among the sequences in nature. Natural evolution is treated as undivine because it is also natural.

Evolution of phenomena is not really operative causation.

How can natural causation, with its regress of *dependent* causes, ever be final, *per se?* It is always sending us in quest of *a cause that is not itself caused.* So one finds at last in natural causation a call for a self-determined or supernatural Power that is not merely a caused cause,—this last being only the sign of the approach of its natural successor, or physical effect, not the really originating power. A god who could conceivably have a beginning, and who is thus essentially a finite god; or who is inferred to be unbeginning only because we have no historical proof that God ever began, is virtually thought of only as a part of physical nature,—an antecedent that perhaps may be eternal because we have no record of any natural predecessor. But are we not obliged to bring to

the consideration of change, the conviction that natural sequence must be always dependent upon Power that is independent—the Universal Power? This preconviction does not rest on any evidence which history or external nature might offer, in regard to the beginningness or the unbeginningness of existing natural order. That order may be unbeginning, and yet throughout and for ever dependent—an eternally dependent cosmos—an eternally divine evolution—an endless progressive creation.

The possibility of reading the unbeginning and unending succession of cosmic changes in terms of natural causation, does not supersede God.

Again. The progress of scientific interpretation is continually extending our information about what the natural sequences are. Scientific inquiry discovers caused causes, which can be presented to the senses and represented in sensuous imagination. It thus fills gaps in the physical succession that were before conceived to be bridged over by divine agency, which was dogmatically opposed to the "causes" that alone concern physical science and historical research. The continuity of natural change becomes less and less interrupted by gaps, in proportion as science succeeds in unravelling the intricate web of natural causation: with each advance the need is lessened for interpolating divine "interference" to bridge over the interval. But under an enlarged theological conception of nature, what forbids the history of this planet, through all its changes, inorganic and organic, including the evolution of its human organisms, being read throughout in terms of natural causation? What forbids that, if not in the future progress of discovery, yet to the mind's eye of higher intelligence, the endless natural—yet latently divine—procession may arrange itself in an unbroken system of caused causes, in which every change, whether in the history of extended things or in the history of conscious lives, has its physical correlative? This would be the Universe conceived exhaustively in terms of natural science. True as far as it goes, this scientific reading, exclusively in terms of caused causality, is after all inadequate to the demands of the higher *homo mensura* criterion—which is the *divina mensura* criterion humanised; it is not even man's complete answer to his final question. We need to deepen this mechanical inter-

pretation of nature by a teleological interpretation, if, even in an unbeginning and unending natural world, we are living in what is finally a divine or supernatural universe.

The natural history of the material world is truly a history of natural antecedents, which are metaphorically called *agents*. They are to us only *signs* of their so-called effects,—signs through which the Universal Power is continually presenting order, meaning, and adaptations to conscious persons who have appeared on this planet, in the course of its natural evolution. Sensible signs, not operative causes, make up the visible world. Nature is a divine sense-symbolism adapted to the use of man. Without natural causes there could be no humanly calculable, and more or less controllable, course of events. But if really to explain an event be to assign its origin and final cause, natural science never explains anything; its province is only to discover the divinely established custom followed in the natural succession.

The "course of nature" only a system of constant sequences, which, because constant, are significant or interpretable.

Natural causation therefore need not supersede Divine Providence always latent in the natural universe. The discovery of a physical cause is only the discovery of an additional illustration of the universal fact, that we are having our being in an interpretable world; which, although by us interpreted only in part, yet appeals to a human intelligence that *participates* in the omnipresent intelligence. This presupposes microcosmic and macrocosmic reason—the one in man, the other in the universe. The complex order of nature is God continually speaking to us. The elaborate web, weaved according to laws of natural connection, is a means to the end of its being a revelation to us of each other and of God. Living in and through this order, we are living in and through perpetual active providence; in a process which may be without beginning, and may persist without end—at once natural and supernatural—outward nature significant of the supernature with which it is animated. So far pantheism expands a narrow theism. The idea of constant divine or orderly determination of universal nature is a contribution to truth which theism receives from pantheism. "Men,"

Natural causation only the assumption, that the world in which we find ourselves is physically interpretable.

says Spinoza, "have been wont to call that only whereof the natural cause is unknown the work of God. For people in general think that the power or providence of God is then most plainly manifested, when they perceive something to happen in the course of nature which is uncommon. And in no way do they think that the existence of God may be more clearly proved than from this — that external nature doth *not* keep her order. Wherefore they deem that all those set aside God who explain events by natural causes, or who try to find the conditions on which events naturally depend. For they suppose that God is doing nothing, as long as nature is moving on in the accustomed order; and on the other hand, that the powers of nature and natural causes are idle whenever God is acting by interference with nature. They imagine therefore two powers, distinct from each other—to wit, the power of God, and the powers of natural things; which last they suppose to have been at first determined by God, or, as most nowadays express themselves, to have been created by Him. But what they mean by *nature*, and what by *God*, they know not; except that they suppose the power of God to be a sort of arbitrary regal government, and that they attribute a mechanical force all its own to nature. The common herd, therefore, call unusual works of nature miracles, or works of God; and partly out of devotion, partly out of opposition to science, they even wish to remain ignorant of the natural causes of events, and delight to hear of things which they are unable to interpret scientifically, and are therefore most apt to adore."

Does "natural causation" explain anything finally?

The question at the heart of this is—Whether what are called natural causes should, otherwise than metaphorically, be called *causes*. The point to be kept in view is, that physical causation, with the alleged equivalence between *its* effects and *its* causes, presents only a system of interpretable signs, which, because orderly, is practically the language of Divine Providence. Natural science unfolds the constant sequences in detail, and usefully advances our interpretation of our surroundings; each applicable scientific discovery is an illustration of its utility. The

old-fashioned theologian may suggest striking examples, gathered with more or less skill, mostly from observation of living organisms. But the perpetual evolution of the cosmos, charged throughout with natural order, and throughout with means that lead to ends, is the constant miracle of God in Nature. Order is presumed inevitable, in moral faith, to be latent in all that happens in inorganic and organised nature. Striking instances of each, in the form of discovered law and manifest purpose, embrace only an insignificant portion of the illimitable number of constant laws and adapted means. Doubtless examples of adaptation of means to ends are more impressive to a human mind in appearances presented by living organisms than in those of inorganic nature. But withal this, are we not intellectually at liberty to read *all* our physical experience in the faith that it is experience of a cosmos in which providential law and purpose are omnipresent and endless, present even in things and events which seem to us insignificant? The fall of a grain of sand is not too insignificant for the application of the rule of providential gravitation. Why should any event in the universe be out of the range of infinite omnipresent providence?

Natural causation admits of a spiritual interpretation, as the continuous revelation of omnipresent active Reason.

To determine between the alternative mysteries of a sudden creation of cosmos, at a definite date in the past, and the mystery of unbeginning and unending providential evolution, perhaps transcends human understanding. We have no reason to suppose that cosmical order may not have existed always—in dependence on the principle that makes us now construe its phenomena in terms of order and goodness. We seem to be born into an unbeginning and unending divinely natural evolution; and at any rate we treat the world into which we are born as an interpretable world, the significant language of Divine Intelligence, which even by the intelligence and experience of man is more or less successfully interpreted. Men are indeed dependent on the contingencies of a narrow and broken experience, for their scientific understanding of the qualities and behaviour of their physical surroundings. Each thing and person is con-

nected with every other, in the past and in the distant; so that complete knowledge—unmysterious knowledge—of *anything* is possible only to omniscience. Accordingly, an unconditional certainty, or absolute knowledge, of all the natural causes and all the ends of the things presented in experience is unattainable. Yet human life rests on the faith, that a working intelligence on our part of the Intelligence that is operative in nature *is* within our reach—that in this intercourse with the Intellect that is latent in nature, human intellect need not be put to confusion by nature in the end. When we try to interpret nature as a symbolism, we often find our hypothetical interpretations verified by the event; although there is for us no demonstrable certainty that, with innumerable unknown powers in existence, what now seems verified will be undisturbed. This implies final trust in harmony between the course of nature and the thought of man, which, as we saw, was not foreign even to Hume. The physical relations of things presented to our senses are treated in our scientific interpretations as intelligible language. That this natural language can in some measure be interpreted by man, the gradual growth of man's science of nature is matter-of-fact proof. May we not therefore believe that, in our surrounding universe, we are continually in the presence of Providential Power that is universally and eternally revealing itself in the articulate language of natural causes? Are we not, when in presence of external nature, in a condition which may be compared to that in which we are when in presence of a human being who is speaking to us, or employing signs that enable us to think his thoughts? Order and ends, in the natural economy into which we enter at birth, may be legitimately taken as the visible expression of a Power which perhaps eternally uses Matter for self-revelation to persons, even as men use their bodily organs in communicating with one another;—but with this signal difference, that the natural succession, as well as the Power at work in and through it, may be unbeginning and unending, while the words of men are transitory conventional signs. The finally spiritual interpretation of all natural causation

is equally valid, or at least equally incapable of disproof, however complex the natural links may be, and whatever obstacles may thus be offered to scientific discovery. If natural causation is all ultimately divine, no increase in our physical knowledge of the special causes or laws which constitute the visible succession can dissolve the spiritual significance that is present in each caused cause and in the Whole.

The very complexity of the web of natural causation, which man finds that he is able only with difficulty to unravel scientifically, may perhaps itself be regarded as an example of adaptation of ends to means—when this complexity is considered in its relation to man. The intricate constitution of the cosmos seems to be fitted by its elaborateness for educating human intelligence, and provides the moral discipline involved in painful mastery of the scientific secrets of nature. It may even suggest with more emphasis than a simpler constitution, the constant presence of Active Reason; and in a way apt to induce reverential faith or adoration, when the natural language costs time and labour to find its meaning, or when it is physically interpretable only tentatively, and at last only to a small extent, chiefly for the operative purposes and increase of social happiness.

The complexity of the cosmos, and consequent difficulties, educate mind and character in man.

The basis of human life and experience is found in the faith that the evolving universe *must be* charged with perfectly good meaning and purpose. This does not depend on the transcendent alternative of whether the natural order, with its divine meanings and adaptations, had an absolute beginning, or is, on the contrary, an unbeginning and unending revelation of omnipotent goodness. Either way, we are living and moving and having our being in the midst of an intelligible natural revelation, out of which human sciences gradually construct themselves. As the relations of natural causality are intelligible, while they are independent of the human investigators, true science of nature, so far from contradicting the supposition that man entered at birth into an essentially intelligible or divine universe, proceeds throughout all its inquiries, experiments, and verifications, upon this

The cardinal fact for us is, that the universe into which we awake at birth *is* cosmic, not chaotic; not when, or whether it ever, began to be.

tacit assumption, as its ultimate and indispensable working hypothesis. If *we* are to form any conception of the Universal Power, it must be the conception of Power that is unconscious, or else of Power that is intelligent. The alternatives are a material or a spiritual conception of the Power finally at work in nature, with which man is invited to co-operate, by adapting natural sequences to his own ends. *Vincitur parendo.*

The need which impels us to one or other of these alternatives, instead of resting in the fact that we, somehow, find ourselves in a physical cosmos.

I may be asked, whether there is human need or room for determining between those alternatives. Can man proceed further than practically to recognise that in fact he is living in a physically interpretable universe. Now I do not find that I am arrested at this point. For I do find that what are called "natural causes," so far as my knowledge carries me, are not causes *in their own right.* I find no evidence that matter can originate change, or even that the term "agent" is intelligible, until one has had experience of personal agents in self-conscious activity. I touched on this in the lectures on materialism and egoism, and I must return to it in the sequel. To rationality in nature, all, including materialists, virtually make their final appeal. To find with the biologist what the physical conditions are under which a human being begins sentient and self-conscious life, is not to explain conscious intelligence. *Matter, as we perceive it, explains nothing finally.* Motion of molecules can only explain motion in other molecules, and not even this finally; for there is no perceptible connection between contact of moving masses in space, and the motion of other masses which follows. All one can say is, that we expect the latter in faith, when we see the former. The former is to us the intelligible sign, and so the foundation of the natural prophecy, or scientific prevision, upon which we proceed as a venture of faith. The world presented to the senses is, as it were, a Divine Book of Prophecy: if it is undivine it may in the end deceive: a suspected witness cannot verify anything.

Lotze on the materialistic or

Consistent undivine materialism is impossible; but the numerous unconscious assumptions of materialists conceal this. "The materialistic assumption," as Lotze says, "takes

upon itself to show how, from bare properties of space occupancy—divisibility, inertia, and mobility, the whole universe, and therefore its spiritual constituents, could be naturally developed; without admixture of any other principle or cause whatever. Now, psychology compels us to see that motions in matter, or in material organisms, are only the occasions upon which there arise in us spiritual processes, such as sensations and thoughts. But *why* these occasions are followed by those spiritual states is not only not a subject of possible empirical knowledge, but it is even possible to see that man can never reach the point where it could be demonstrated that a mode of motion, even in the most curiously elaborated aggregate of molecules, must cease to remain a mode of motion, and would be under an absolute necessity to transform *itself* into a process of self-conscious life. According to all ascertainable principles, from *motions alone* nothing but a new distribution, propagation, or arrest of *motions* can issue. A spiritual sequence can be attached to them only indirectly—that is, through their dependent relation to something else, which in itself possesses capacity for the manifestation of spiritual processes. Hence, in each particular instance, as well as in the totality of the universe, a barely material ultimate principle, in which matter is endowed only with those characteristics which are known by us to belong to it, is incapable of originating the world of spiritual processes." The conception of the universe, as fundamentally spiritual, is, therefore, deeper than the conception of it, as ultimately only an evolution of atoms—physically true, so far as it goes, as this last conception may be. For there is no necessary inconsistency between the moral venture involved in theism and the scientific conjecture that fire-mist was the *physical* beginning of our solar system.

undivine alternative.

God latent in nature is the tacit fundamental postulate of the faith which is the foundation of natural science. But it is the revelation that is latent in the spirit of man that supplies the key to the divine interpretation even of the material world. Apart from this, the outer world,

Our revelation of God not based primarily on our physical nature.

with its natural laws and ends, is darkness; for external nature, apart from the higher life found in man, even conceals the God whom it nevertheless reveals, when it is looked at in the light of the moral postulates and our spiritual consciousness. I proceed accordingly to look at Man as—at least for Man—an image or symbol of the Universal Power.

LECTURE II.

IDEAL MAN AN IMAGE OF GOD.

Retrospect.

LAST lecture was partly intended to show, that obligation to presuppose divine or perfect order and purpose omnipresent in nature is independent of the question, whether the natural evolution had a beginning; and to suggest that even if we have been ushered into a cosmos that had *no* beginning, we find ourselves *now* living and moving and having our being amidst surroundings that must be presupposed to be eternally trustworthy or divine, as a condition of their being even physically interpretable.

Man and the supersensible.

But of whose intelligence is universal nature the expression? What about the ordering or designing Power? What is meant by supernaturalness? Have we any example in experience or its implicates of a cause superior to the causes alone recognised in physical science? Do we not find in ourselves—in the ego—an implied supernaturalness, which introduces meaning into the term "power," and may supply an analogy to divinity omnipresent in nature—the microcosm in man to the macrocosm which analogously reveals God? These questions lead us up to Man—an embodied moral being, who shares in divine reason, and who, as a personally responsible agent, is connected with the divine centre of a moral world to which outward nature is in harmonious subordination. Under this final conception, every advance of the natural sciences deepens and enriches man's conception of God. When an event can be referred to a natural

cause, it is not by this divorced from God, if all natural causation is divine.

Man inspired.

One seems to find the signal example of the divine in the spirit of man. In his Common Reason, or Rational Sense, one finds "the inspiration of the Almighty which giveth understanding." We see in man a being at once natural and supernatural—intermediate between brute and Deity—with intelligence and experience that is neither nescience nor Omniscience,—equally unable, as Pascal suggests, to know all, and to be ignorant of all; who is great even in knowing himself to be miserable; who lives by interpreting the future through the past.

Organic conditions, not the self-conscious life itself.

The visible organic conditions under which consciousness makes its appearance in man, in terms of which its gradual development may be expressed in biology, is surely not the moral and spiritual life—actually felt, thought, and acted, although invisible—of which the organic motions are only the natural occasion. Conscious intelligence is manifested in and through visible processes in nature; but those visible processes are not the invisible consciousness. Faith that I am in a divine or interpretable world involves more than perception of what is sense-presented. That sense appearances are virtually significant language, I take on trust—without having it demonstrated; it is the fundamental postulate in natural science, as well as in every calculated movement in daily life. A chaos of letters of the alphabet, presented in a heap, is not to be confounded with the same letters organised in a book, and charged with meaning, so that the reader finds the outside book in intellectual affinity with his own intelligence. Man treats nature in the faith that, in trying to reduce its phenomena to science, he is trying to read an intelligible natural Book.

Self-conscious intelligence.

But living consciousness is more than this latent intelligibility; more, too, than the sensuous phenomena in which the reason latent in nature receives expression. Intelligibility, abstracted from a living thinker, is an empty abstraction. Let us suppose all conscious life in the universe suddenly annihilated. What then becomes of the latent interpretability of natural phenomena: or of

the phenomena themselves, which, on pain of total scepticism, we are obliged to presuppose interpretable, and therefore in correspondence with intellect—the macrocosm in analogy with the microcosm?

Conscious life the light of the world.

It is to the necessary implicates of rational consciousness in man, not to phenomena presented to the senses, that we should look for the true key, at least the best key within man's reach. And rational consciousness is not proved to have its necessary correlative in organised phenomena of matter. But if this could be physiologically proved, so that a scientific equivalent for each conscious state could be found in the organism, this minor monism would still leave rational consciousness and its implicates, not things without, as our final criterion. Whether human perception is a transitory or a permanent fact in the universe, Matter, apart from all perception, is an unrealisable abstraction. Conscious life is the indispensable light of the world. The sciences themselves—physical, chemical, biological—exist only in or through the conscious activity of a person; so that it is through spiritual life and agency that existence is realised in sensation or in science. Living science must be a function of conscious life. The biologist, in his science, reads intelligible symbols, in the form of organic processes. Each of his discoveries presupposes an invisible mental act. Success in science depends upon the living intellectual development of the discoverer. And the validity of his discoveries depends at last upon mental presuppositions, which he has to make in faith. He assumes, without proof, orderly constancy in nature; for otherwise his expectations and scientific verifications have no ground to rest on. Actual experience is only of the past and present: we cannot forecast the future without an undemonstrated trust in the orderly constancy or rationality of external nature. The very power the biologist claims of being able to infer that he himself, with his rational consciousness and all its implicates, is only a natural issue of the evolution of the material world—this power must itself be referred to his rational consciousness. All this makes man and his divine experience the most

significant revelation of what God is that the universe presents to man. Man, the microcosm, is the unique example, in which, if anywhere within experience, religion finds an "image" of the infinite God. The ideal man is for us the symbol of God in nature. The finite spirit, incarnate in his body, is the symbol of Infinite Spirit, incarnate in the universe. As the highest form of human experience—the spiritual life of man in its full development may be said to signify to man what is final or supreme in the infinite reality, revealing God in the only way God can be apprehended by man.

The inadequacy of merely biological interpretations.

Hence the philosophical inadequacy of all merely biological interpretations of man,—their inadequacy, measured even by our modest intellectual resources, as well as for our moral and religious constitution. A wholly physiological account of "action" and "reaction" between man's animal organism and its material environment, under natural law of selection, omits the necessary spiritual implicates of supernatural reason and moral agency. For it is these that reveal God,—so far as Infinite Being can be revealed to an intelligence intermediate between total nescience and Omniscience. It is through that which is found by reflection in man's invisible life of consciousness, not through that which is presented to any or all of his external senses, that the world assumes for him its final interpretation.

The language of Nature and Comte's maxim.

The progress of the physical sciences is evidence that nature is a continued discourse on the part of the Universal Power, addressed to man in the significant language of natural causes. Scientific intercourse with the universe is intelligence in intercourse with intelligence—man learning to think some of the divine thought that is latent in the cosmos. Yet curiously it was a maxim of Comte, that the heavens declare no other glory than that of Hipparchus, Kepler, Newton, and the other illustrious astronomers, who have interpreted some of the language that is uttered by the masses of matter that occupy infinite space. If this is so, the glory of Newton's 'Principia' is not the glory of Newton, but only of those readers of the 'Principia' who are able to understand its physical theo-

ries and demonstrations. If the Book of Nature receives from the astronomical discoverer the meaning which it is found to express, must not the book which was supposed to make Newton illustrious receive *its* meaning, not from Newton, but from its intelligent readers?

Reason and Will in man are supernatural, because not physically explicable.

But it is in man's life as a moral being, in the responsible exercise of deliberate Will, even more than in man divinely inspired with Reason, that the facts of inward experience refuse to be read only in terms of external natural science;—this too after account is taken of the *inherited* results of organic and extra-organic interaction, in the history of the animal ancestors of each human organism, and also of the history of the whole material world of which a human body is of course a part. It is by possession of morally responsible will that man rises *as a person* above all that is physical and impersonal. His moral personality is the type of the divine principle at the heart of existence. Is not responsible will in man supernatural, self-determined, not determined by his organism: so that man may be said to hold the unique position of being at once an outcome of physical evolution, and yet a creative agent in respect of all acts for which he is justly responsible? Reason and Will cannot be refunded into the caused causes of science: in spiritual action man erects himself, as a personal agent, above himself as merely an issue of the natural evolutionary sequence. Unless above himself as merely a part of visible nature, he *can* erect himself into an active rational or supernatural agent, how mean a thing is man. If he is under moral obligation to obey moral law, he cannot be wholly a part of the dependent causal mechanism. The way of looking at the universe that makes visible nature and natural causation the highest measure of reality must be inadequate as a philosophical theory, if man is an agent who is responsible for anything that he does.

Science and morality in man imply more than nat-

Rationality and morality in man both involve more than outward physical sequence. The dogma of the speculative naturalist, that the outer world acts upon man mechanically, as bodies in motion "act" upon bodies at

ural sequence.

rest, so that scientific interpretation of experience by a human discoverer is *itself* only a physical effect of natural causality on his body,—is a dogma which omits man's participation in divine reason, and his consequent power of distinguishing between fancy and reality, which science implies. Its defect is no less obvious, when the naturalist argues, that the relation of motives to acts for which a human agent is responsible must be the same in kind as the relation which one body bears to another body, when motion in the one follows impact by another in motion; for this leaves out of account that superiority to physical nature which personal responsibility involves: a natural cause is not morally responsible for any of its physical effects. Intellectual power of distinguishing between transitory appearances and the deeper relations which they signify—between sensation and natural science itself—is a power in which man erects himself, as supernatural, above himself as only a part of nature. But the moral power of making a responsible choice between good and evil in action is emphatically that in which man is free, either to erect himself above the temptations of sense, or to let his proper personality be merged in physical nature.

The ultimate mysteries of infinite physical regress and of moral causation.

In man two ultimate mysteries seem to meet—the mystery in which scientific causation merges, and the mystery of moral or immoral will in a finite being. In scientific causation we become involved in the mystery of eternal succession: since no natural cause is self-determined, each presupposes an anterior natural cause, every cause in the regress being only a caused cause. Our self-determining intelligence and responsibility for personal acts contradicts supposed universality of natural causation, and puts us face to face with an originating agent, to whom originative power is attributed. Man, intermediate between the nescient and the omniscient, can neither imagine nor comprehend the universal reality in either of these ways. He cannot comprehend an unbeginning and unending evolution among orderly dependent changes, nor can he comprehend a universe that contains self-determining agents. Natural causation in its ulti-

mate implicates, and morally responsible agency in its ultimate implicates, must both be *incompletely* intelligible. Each conception is necessarily mysterious, in an intelligence that can comprehend and judge only in part, or from the side, not at the infinite centre. But this incompleteness deprives man of the knowledge which can assert that natural causation, on the one hand, and morally responsible acts of which the human agent, not the Power that is omnipresent in nature, is the originating source, on the other hand, are *necessarily* contradictory conceptions. Man's ultimate conception of natural causation is *not complete enough* to justify the conclusion that a wicked act *must* be determined by the Universal Power that is revealed in the sequences of nature, and not by the person who is regarded in moral reason as responsible for it. The existence of finite agents, who are responsible for what ought not to enter into existence, and therefore had no necessity for existing, is accordingly *not impossible:* man's experience of remorse is a practical proof that this independence is true of man in fact. Conscience points to acts of persons whose *self*-originating causality can be brought home to them by conscience. This moral experience introduces a deeper meaning into the term "power" than when it is affirmed of externally caused causes. An immoral act *must originate* in the immoral agent; a physical effect is not *known to originate* in its physical cause.

Cosmic faith and moral faith.

Thus cosmic faith and moral faith are both alike concerned with what is incompletely intelligible—mysterious under the limiting conditions of man's embodied reason: neither can be proved to be incapable of reconciliation in a higher than human intelligence. Faith in physical necessity need not subvert faith in what is higher than physical necessity—yet not *proved* to be inconsistent with physical order, and the assumption at the foundation of natural science.

Natural order and personal agency.

The profound question of the relation between embodied responsible agents and the divine order of external nature is suggested by Professor Huxley's interesting

essay on the hypothesis that animals — including the human animal—are only sentient automata. "It seems to me," he says, "that in men as in brutes there is no proof that any state of consciousness is the cause of change in the motion of the matter of the organism. . . . It follows that our mental conditions are simply the symbols in consciousness of changes which take place automatically in the organism; and that, to take an extreme illustration, the feeling we call volition is not the cause of a voluntary act, but the symbol of that state of the brain which is the immediate cause of that act." So viewed, men are only physical organisms, not *persons:* they are visible and tangible *things;* with each of which conscious life is inexplicably connected,—sentient intelligence in man being more developed in its organism than in any other animal organism on this planet. But in all animals alike, conscious life is powerless: it is to be discounted as wholly irrelevant, at least in the scientific explanation of man. The metamorphoses which the material world undergoes, in the persistent processes of natural causation which science tries to formulate, are all independent of the self-conscious ego. Man is not entitled, notwithstanding felt responsibility for his acts, to be included as a factor. Invisible conscious agency is not agency; there is only evolution of visible phenomena from visible antecedents. We are deluded, it seems, when we suppose originating personal agency; for no act of human will can either increase or diminish molecular motion in the brain: all cerebral motions must be naturally caused by other motions, organic or extra-organic, under laws which it is the office of biological science to find and formulate.

Must "spirit and spontaneity" be "banished from human thought"?

But although biology may reasonably confine itself to generalising natural sequences of physical phenomena, I am unable to see with Huxley how this can justify "the gradual banishment from *all* regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity;" for by "spontaneity" I suppose he means acts which, when regarded as morally referable to an agent, are inferred to be therefore free from "natural necessities," on account of the agent's sole responsibility for them. Instead of this banish-

ment of "spontaneity," biology, like every science of visible nature, seems to place us face to face with the question suggested by the relation between material nature and finite persons to whom moral responsibility is attributed. It makes the philosopher ask how the numerous seeming "interferences" of moral and immoral agents with the course of nature can be reconciled with the exclusive sufficiency of visible causation which biological naturalism presumes. Moral responsibility for a human act depends upon the human agent who is morally praised or blamed for it being, so far, independent of the natural causation to which "states of the brain" are subject. Community between the mind that is manifested consciously in man, and the Mind latent in nature, and signified to man by interpretable sensuous signs, is the religious postulate of science. The possession of power that is above conditions of physical causation seems indispensable to an act for which the apparent agent can be morally praised or blamed; although the relation of man's moral or immoral acts to the supreme order and purpose can be only imperfectly understood by him, if our conception of physical causality and our conception of moral and immoral agency must be ultimately incomplete or mysterious.

Consequent paradoxes.

The exclusion of all spiritual questions, not only from biology as a wholly physical science, but also from "all human thought," seems to land the consistent thinker in curious paradoxes. If rational and volitional conscious life, and all that is involved in this, are only irrelevant accidents in the universe, it seems to follow that all changes would have occurred exactly as they have occurred, if rational and volitional consciousness had never arisen in the universe. The effects in nature with which *men* are credited or discredited must all be placed, in that case, to the credit or discredit of the Universal Power manifested in nature. What are called productions of mind must be conceived as only part of the natural issue of human organisms. The books contained in the world, for example, would have become what they are by a law of natural selection, under which their visible contents might have been evolved as we have

them, yet without consciousness on the part of supposed authors and printers. The brilliant additions to scientific literature for which we are grateful to Professor Huxley, when we refer them to his conscious agency, are only the natural issue of the organism that bore his name, itself one of the issues of the gradual evolution of the material world: his published works might have existed exactly as they exist now, if neither his conscious life nor any other had ever made its appearance. Indeed if consciousness and personal activity are irrelevant accidents in the procession of molecular changes, what proof can I have that at this moment mine is not the solitary conscious life, in a world empty of all other conscious beings? On what reasonable ground can I assert that I am now in the presence of conscious persons; or how can one reasonably believe that the words he hears spoken are not undulations of the air, that have been naturally caused by molecular motions in a visible organism, themselves the natural issue of molecular changes in surrounding nature, conveyed, all unconsciously, under natural laws to an organ of hearing? Although I suppose I am now surrounded by conscious agents, perhaps I am in the presence of unconscious automatic organisms.

Sense phenomena can be significant of conscious persons and their intentions.

In Berkeley's 'Minute Philosopher,' Euphranor, the religious interlocutor, in the dialogue which concerns the religious conception of the universe, suggests that we all have as clear and immediate a certainty of the providential activity of God as each of us has of the existence of persons around him when he sees them speak or act. "What!" rejoins Alciphron, the sceptical interlocutor, "what! do you pretend you can have the same assurance of the being of a *God* that you can have of *mine*, whom you actually see standing before you and talking to you?" "The very same, if not greater," is the reply. "How do you make this appear?" asks Alciphron. "By the *person* Alciphron," Euphranor answers, "is meant an individual *thinking* person, and not the hair, skin, or visible surface, or any part of the outward form, colour, or shape of Alciphron." This the sceptic readily allows. "And in granting this," the other rejoins, "you grant that in a

strict sense I do not *see* Alciphron, but only such visible signs and tokens as suggest and infer the being of his *invisible* thinking principle or soul. Even so, in the self-same manner, it seems to me that, though I cannot with the eyes of flesh behold the invisible God, yet I do in the strictest sense behold and perceive, by all my senses, such operations as suggest, indicate, and demonstrate an invisible God; as certainly, and with the same evidence, as other signs, perceived by sense, do suggest to me the existence of *your* soul, spirit, or thinking principle,—which indeed I am convinced of only by a few signs or effects, and the motions of one small organised body; whereas I do at all times and in all places perceive sensible signs which evince the being of a God."

The agency of Mind signified by the phenomena of the universe.

The implied argument is, that the universe is the embodiment of Universal Mind, presupposed in the order and relations of means to ends which are found in its phenomena. In this we have the same sort of evidence for the Universal Mind, although that Mind is invisible, as we have for the existence of self-conscious human persons in the movements of their visible organisms; which are reasonably taken to signify their equally invisible conscious activity. In like manner as I am assured that the intending will of another human being is the explanation of the audible words and visible actions which I refer to him, so I am bound in reason to recognise, with equal assurance, the existence of supreme intending Will, as the explanation of the order and purpose manifested in the sense-symbolism of a scientifically interpretable world. The Divine spirit is *embodied* in the great sense-symbolism of Nature, as human spirits are *embodied* in the little sense-symbolisms presented in the motions of visible organised bodies, which resemble what each calls "his own" body. But if free and perfect rational agency cannot be supposed in universal nature, does it not follow that ordering and designing activity of a man is as illogically concluded from the words and actions of a human organism? There is as little room for human spiritual agency as for divine agency. All that is popularly attributed to calculating mind is explicable, it seems, as the natural issue

of the unconscious processes of natural causation in the universal organism. Men and animals, with all their so-called works, are movements in naturally evolved machines, of all which I am perhaps the solitary spectator. The idea of morally responsible personality, with free intending will as its implicate, is a superfluous issue of the organism I call mine; and a like superfluity if an issue of other organisms as well as mine. But after all I have no proof that other organisms are at all connected with conscious life, if all their words and overt actions are what they are, through organic and inorganic natural causality alone. The unconscious natural succession of molecular changes in a human body, without the "interference" of *any* conscious intelligence and will, would be a sufficient explanation of the printed essay on animal automatism attributed to Huxley. Neither world-making nor book-making would presuppose spiritual activity; for worlds and books would be equally the issue of the orderly sequence of the visible and tangible phenomena that have formed themselves naturally into books and into worlds.

Books without authors.

But what, I must further ask, are natural automatic changes in organisms, and through organisms in extra-organic things, or, *vice versa*, when the changes are totally abstracted from perception or consciousness? What is the 'Principia,' or what the 'Essay Concerning Human Understanding,' without conscious intelligence and intending purpose in Newton and Locke, who are responsible for them, and without conscious activity in their readers? The visible words printed on the pages of a book *become significant* only when consciousness makes its appearance. Whether the relation between a person and the visible evolution of his book is called a relation of cause and effect or not, it is such that the visible appearances are accepted by sane minds as reasonable guarantee for originating action of invisible intending mind. I cannot banish the latter, and then fully think out my experience on the hypothesis of the exclusive reality of the former. A human intending will is responsible for the sensuous signs of deliberate meaning and purpose of which a human or-

ganism is the antecedent. The immoral act for which the individual murderer is held responsible cannot be shifted off, first to his non-moral organism, and finally to the Universal Power.

Natural causation the characteristic of effects; conscience is the index which points to originating power.

When the meaning of the words "matter" and "force" is considered, in the light of our spiritual as well as our sensuous experience, it appears that the discovery of the natural antecedents of a change is no final explanation of it even for man; and also that the idea of originating power, on which all change finally depends, is got from reflection upon an irresistible perception of moral responsibility for deliberately intended acts. "I *ought*, therefore I *can*," is like an index which points to *agency of persons* as man's true conception of active causation or power, in himself and in the universe. Consciousness of moral ideals implies moral obligation; but there can be no moral obligation unless there is *power finally within the finite agent* to obey or to disobey. The human subject of moral obligation, so far as he is capable of obligation, must be free from the mechanism of scientific causation. The act must originate in himself, and not be merely a term in the passive succession of physical antecedents and consequents which visible nature presents. The only really operative power that enters inevitably into human experience is moral or spiritual. Is not perfectly rational agency the highest explanation of the universal evolution that is intelligible to *man?* Personally originated volition—under obligation of duty,—necessarily involved in moral responsibility,—is that in man which I call supernatural. You have the contrast between the mechanism of nature and the agency of man in the familiar words of our great religious poet:—

> "Look up to heaven! the industrious sun
> Already half his race hath run;
> He *cannot* halt, nor go astray,
> But our immortal spirits *may*."

Causality and conscience.

Originative Cause, in short, is reached through Conscience, and in a finally ethical conception of the universe we have a deeper hold of reality than when it is

treated only as a scientifically interpretable system of sense sequences. *Man at his highest*—acting freely under moral obligation, with the implied intellectual and moral postulates—is surely a more fitting key for his ultimate interpretation of things than man only as an animal organism, abstracted from the experience which can be disclaimed only by disclaiming human responsibility. The Macrocosm in analogy with the microcosm—the Universal Power in analogy with what is highest in man—the *homo mensura*, when *homo* means man moral and spiritual as well as merely sensuous—the *divina mensura* humanised —in this we seem to have the fittest analogy within reach for the Universal Power in which we are having our being.

The religious conception of the universe.

The finally ethical conception of the universe involves the idea of obligation, with implied power in agents to originate what ought not to exist. Religion includes trust in the Universal Power; and for those with whom reverential cosmic faith in natural order is the highest principle to which they have risen, this cosmic faith is in a manner *their* religion. But when faith goes no further than the cosmic postulate; when it is emptied of the ingredients contributed by man's experience of himself as a supernatural being,—the merely cosmic faith contains no guarantee that intelligence may not be in the end put to confusion—after external nature and human nature are emptied of Omnipotent Goodness. What now seems cosmic order may then in the end be physical and moral anarchy, and life intrusted to a faith so thin and shallow is not worth living. Pessimist despair, instead of religious hope, is the worship appropriate to the god of wholly physical faith. So that although this cosmic faith in a non-moral universe may be called religion, it is not religion in the moral meaning of the word. It wants a final trust that is absolute, and adapted to a moral being. If so, the morally religious conception of the universe is more deeply philosophical than the physically scientific. If scientific faith is *baseless* confidence that the world will not in the end put to *intellectual* confusion those who rely on the universality of its natural order, religious faith not only gives its basis to this physical faith, but is the *absolute*

assurance that the Supreme Power will not put to permanent *moral* confusion those who strive to realise the true ideal of man, assured that the universe is eternally working for good to those who thus live. God represented in the Ideal Man is, for man, the revelation of perfect goodness on the throne of the universe.

LECTURE III.

WHAT IS GOD?

Simonides.

I ALLUDED formerly to the "prudent reserve of Simonides," who, according to the story, being asked by Hiero, *What God was?* desired a day to think out the question, and then two days more, after that continually enlarging the time needed for the answer, but without ever being able either to form a picture of God, or an adequate definition of God. Are we better prepared than Simonides?

Is the religious conception of the universe reasonable?

I have not engaged with the more articulate questions of religion. I am concerned with the previous question of the reasonableness of religious trust in the Universal Power. I have been asking how the universe should be finally regarded by man? Must it be finally under conceptions of mathematical quantity, or of physical causation only, as with Spinoza and Hume. Does not a larger conception of what reason involves require that it should be regarded practically in analogy with man as a moral agent, the centre of the little universe of his own personal life? Is the modern physical conception of continuous evolution the highest that is attainable? Is not this conception inadequate when measured by man as a spiritual being? Is the religious conception of the universe the really reasonable one, under indispensable moral trust in the Universal Power at the root of reason in man?

Untheistic interpretations of the universe.

I have tried to present, in a sympathetic temper, the chief ways in which the universe has been looked at untheistically. The constructive conceptions of Universal Materialism, Panegoism, and Pantheism, were tried pro-

visionally in succession; and I asked a candid consideration for what seemed unsatisfying in each; while not overlooking the partial truth, which gives to each what strength it has. If you would convince another who really loves truth, of defect in conception, you must try to see the side at which things are looked at by him; for on that side his view of them is probably true: and by seeing a truth, common to him and to you, he may more readily recognise what is wanting in his own conception. We next tried provisionally the agnostic way of looking at things, to which Monist theories seem to lead in the end. Here we found all constructive conceptions of the universe held in suspense, and with them, when agnosticism is bold enough, faith in experience, whether sensuous or spiritual, suspended; natural science, as well as religion, subsiding in the total darkness of universal nescience.

The correlation of physical, and religious or theistic faith.

But the state in which one doubts about everything is a state in which man cannot live. Even our animal life requires faith in nature. We cannot live without eating and drinking; and we do not eat or drink without faith in nutriment, or in the agreeable sensations, which we believe visible food to signify, when it is only seen, and before it is tasted. We are daily living in the movement or evolution which constitutes our experience. How far can we go in interpreting the meaning of this experience? Ought we to put a fully religious meaning at last upon the Whole; or must we be contented to interpret it under the attenuated religious presupposition (if it can be called religious) of a wholly physical or non-moral order, with its physical or non-moral god? Does God—the Final Principle—the Universal Power—dissolve into ultimately inexplicable and purposeless natural order; or does God mean ever-active moral reason and purpose, at the root of a divinely maintained physical order, in which the omnipresent power is perfect goodness personified? Is the universe to be finally interpreted in and through what is found in man at his highest or best—man with his ineradicable conviction of moral responsibility, and his religious faith that even the natural universe must

be a manifestation of Power he must think of as perfect reason and goodness? Is the progressive evolution in space and time finally interpretable only in the light of a faith which can rest absolutely on nothing short of Infinite Goodness? Or must it finally be interpreted in the darkness of an inexplicable, perhaps illusory, natural order, without divine centre,—a sham cosmos in which there can be no final trust or perfect peace? At the least, is there anything that *absolutely forbids* man to interpret the universe finally as the revelation of Power that, so far as he has to do with what is real, is in analogy with what is highest and best in himself;—so that Ideal Man may be taken as virtually the "image" of the Universal Power, with which he is connected in his whole living experience?

A way open for a practical answer to Hiero's question?

It is in this way of looking at the universe that I have been approaching a human answer to Hiero's question. The outcome seems already to suggest that the question *may* be answered as it concerns man, while, by man, it remains infinitely unanswerable. Is not the deepest and truest thought *man* can have, that in which the universe is conceived as the manifestation of perfectly good Power, in moral relation to persons who are undergoing spiritual education individually in a finally divine universe—education in an individualising organism—consisting in struggles to rule by obeying nature with which they are continually in contact and collision; which, in the light of their inner consciousness, is seen to be a revelation of perfect goodness; in all which the material world becomes the symbol of Mind and the servant of man. It follows that man in one sense may know God, and yet that God cannot be known infinitely by man. It is blended knowledge and ignorance, real knowledge, in part, of that which passes human knowledge. Nature, or the symbolic world; ego, or our supernatural personality; and God, in whom Nature and Man are reconciled—all are in part, or for human purposes, knowable: they can be known as far as human life needs the knowledge.

Physical science is reached in the faith-venture, that the persistent order and purpose in nature will not suffer

the physical inquirer to be finally put to confusion in chaos. Religion, too, is a leap in the dark, yet with absolute trust in the constant agency of perfect moral reason, as at the root not only of physical order, but as the highest conception man can have of the Universal Power. So the moral or religious faith justifies the physical faith at the root of science, which it deepens and enlarges. The Macrocosm, so regarded, is surely more in harmony with the *homo mensura* principle in its human integrity, than when looked at agnostically—as a finally unintelligible and wholly incalculable aggregate of sense phenomena, which in the end may put us to confusion, intellectually and morally. For the future history of an unreligiously conceived universe, deprived of the guarantee implied in absolute moral trust, may in the end contradict the postulates without which even physical science must dissolve in nescience, deprived of the witness of humanity to the fact, that nature and man are having their natural and moral being in God. Is not theistic trust what inspires confidence even in that narrower intercourse with what is real, in which the physical interpreter hears the divine voice expressed, in terms of physical law, in the beneficent discoveries of natural science?

The religious leap in the dark.

I include the revelation of God which one finds in the moral and religious experience of mankind—including the signal records of it in Hebrew and Christian literature—as part of the material of our expanded Natural Theology. The remarkable experience, preserved in the Bible of Christianity, and in the catholic traditions of Christendom—whatever more it may be—is at least a part of the actual history of mankind. It presents religious conceptions of man and the universe to which men who once lived on this planet have given expression. If a bar is to exclude the student of philosophical theology from this memorable portion of recorded religious experience; and if he must be confined to phenomena of external nature, in the way an astronomer or a chemist confines himself, so that his theology must be in the narrow sense "natural" and "scientific," he is deprived

No alleged inspirations of God in and through man to be excluded from examination.

of the most significant facts in the history of the development of the religious conception. As well say that the astronomer must form astronomical science without reference to the signal revelations of astronomical law that are presented in the movements of our solar system, as that the philosophical theologian must deal with the religious settlement of the universal problem of human life without reference to the experience of persons powerfully inspired by the religious idea. That God seemed to be experienced by men in the way prophets and apostles say that they experienced God, is a fact in history.

A humanly knowable God.

But is Universal Power conceived after the analogy of the Ideal Man an adequate conception of God even for finite intelligence? A God who can be fully comprehended by man cannot be Infinite. But is it reasonable to suppose that the idea of God as Perfect Man is a philosophical solution of the final problem; only because it corresponds to what is highest in the experience of an ephemeral race of living beings, on one of the lesser planets of a solar system? To take this reduced final conception of the Universal Power looks like arrogant assumption, which makes an insignificant being the measure of the Infinite Reality.

Absolute knowledge at the human standpoint.

It would be so if the human finality were taken as adequate to the reality. But the human final conception is not offered as the perfect conception of God, taken from the divine centre—only as the conception of God necessarily taken at the human position away from the centre. It may be the true conception, at man's intermediate position, neither of nescience nor omniscience, at which he may nevertheless realise what is even *eternally* true *for that position;—absolutely real* knowledge of an intelligence that cannot become omniscient, or know reality independently of conditions of time and change. It may be that which, when held reasonably by man, is sufficient to put *him* in what one may call *relatively absolute* rational harmony with the universe; so that faith in it is indispensable in his endeavour to live according to the deepest

and truest *human* relation to God. That a gradually developing religious conception is the chief factor of human progress, may be the supreme example of adaptation found in the constitution of things, and so far a justification of our faith-venture. The religious experience of man in the religions of the world, combined with the necessary inadequacy of all human conceptions of things at the last, teach the lesson that God is infinitely incognisable, while practically revealed.

Is God superconscious?

Does some one ask, What *kind* of Spirit or Mind constitutes God? Are we to imagine a divine consciousness, in the form of a succession of changing states and acts, like those of the inner life in man; or, instead of this, one unchanging intuition of all that is, has been, and is yet to be? It has been suggested that God must be superconscious. But superconsciousness is something that, for us, while nominally above, is really below, conscious intellect and will. The very attempt to conceive a superconscious "Mind" lands the human mind in contradiction. We are told that there may be in the infinite universe something grander and greater than consciousness; that there may be species of existence, modes of being, unnameable by us, which are infinitely superior to consciousness, more to be desired than consciousness; and that this existence may even be open to human beings in a future state. There may be behind the phenomenal curtain something grander than consciousness, we are told. Philosophers, men of science, mystics, poets, prophets, and revealers are all impotent to say what this may be, though they have been for ever putting their souls on the stretch to describe this great and unexplored continent, neither consciousness nor annihilation. Now all this seems to imply that only superconscious God would be God in any degree of reality; not God as approached in thought in and through the highest ideal of man. But the superconscious God leaves us with a lower idea than when we think of God as Perfect Man, or humanised Universal Reason—known yet unknown—known for the ends of our moral and religious life,—unknown, because we are incapable of perfect comprehension—the one signal

example of how human knowledge may be real while the reality that is known surpasses human understanding.

Solvitur ambulando.

This incompleteness arrests the Idealism which, dissatisfied with knowledge that is only in part, professes to interpret all from the divine centre, in what is therefore bound to be Omniscience. Do we find in it more than analysis and synthesis of abstract necessities of reason, instead of the expected solution of all the mysteries of human experience conditioned in time. To the absolute idealist who complains of inadequacy in a religious conception of the universe that is determined on the *homo mensura* principle, or by what is divine in man, one can only say that the refutation is in his own hands. *Solvitur ambulando.* Let him produce in a book the Omniscience which the humbler philosophy is blamed for not producing. Let him rid life of all its mysteries —not by restating them in new language and articulate form, but by solving them in an all-comprehensive philosophical imagination—thus superseding moral faith by actually realising perfect insight of the infinite reality. Let him actually *show* the universe in endless duration, as seen at the divine centre. This would supersede criticism of the intermediate position with which I am satisfied.

The ultimate incomprehensibility of God by man sustains reverence.

The mystery of ultimately incognisable yet revealed Deity is the nourishment of religious adoration, which instinctively feels that our highest experience must be all inadequate to realise Infinite Reality. This is the voice of religion when religion is sufficiently awakened in consciousness. The visible ritual of Catholicism, and not less the invisible mental images of God in popular Protestantism, when regarded as symbols adequate to God, and not merely as helps to religious devotion in man, are rejected by the true worshipper. His language is:—

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to *them*.

"Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

"O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. . . . Great is our Lord: His understanding is infinite."

"God hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea farther, though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it."

"To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him? There is no searching of His understanding. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out."

"I know in part. Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three, and the greatest of these is love."

Christian agnosticism.

Acknowledgment of the incomprehensibility of God, when men try in vain to conceive Deity in infinity, and not merely in and through what is highest in Man, is an agnosticism that is implied in the language of the great Christian thinkers. It is reiterated in the teaching of Origen and Augustine. Chrysostom speaks of God as transcending all apprehension of human knowledge; the reality as seen from its divine centre being incomprehensible to the highest finite intelligence. With Gregory of Nazianzen God is, in a unique sense, unknowable. The pseudo-Dionysius supposes that God is infinitely above knowledge, superconscious, above substance, above mind or spirit, above life. In the hyperbolical language of some Christian thinkers, God in His infinity is more than unknown. He is not unknown merely in the way finite things outside the experience of an individual are to him unknown: He is transcendently above apprehension: without substance, and without realisable existence.

Theology is concerned with what is implied in all

Religious philosophy, in the end, must take the form of reverential faith.

human experience, yet in its infinity incomprehensible. It is concerned with ideas of infinity which are presupposed in all natural or physical, and more deeply in all moral or spiritual, experience. Yet its characteristic ideas cannot be completely rounded in speculative imagination, because, however much enlarged, they *must* in us at last fall short—fragments only of the infinite Reality, —if without a contradiction one may speak of a "fragment" of infinity, or express in terms of quantity what transcends quantity.

"Our little systems have their day;
They have their day, and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from Thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow."

Man's finite need for "supplies by supposition and presumption," to be accepted in faith.

This unique character of man's knowledge of God, or the final meaning of the universe — that incomplete knowledge in which human understanding culminates in moral faith—may have been in Bacon's view when he warns us that "perfection or completeness in divinity is not to be sought. For he that will reduce a knowledge into an art [or science] will make it round and uniform; but in divinity many things must be left abrupt. As the apostle saith, 'we know in part'; and to have the form of a total, as science requires, where there is but matter for a part, cannot be without supplies by supposition and presumption." It is this constant need, in physical science as well as in our religious conceptions, for what Bacon calls "supplies by supposition and presumption," that makes human experience of real existence at last moral *faith*, or *optimist trust*, instead of infinite insight. *Reason* is to be distinguished from *reasoning*, with which it is often confounded. All fruitful reasoning presupposes reason, *i.e.*, final rational trust in the reasonable; and nothing can be reasonably accepted that is inconsistent with the faith that we are living in a universe in which Active Moral Reason is supreme. Omniscience super-

sedes those "supplies by supposition and presumption" which Bacon finds indispensable for limited intelligence in man. Omniscience dispenses with hypothesis and argument. Intuitive thought is our idea of infinite Intelligence. Human knowledge, on the other hand, is advanced through the intervention of premisses, supposed to be already known—by applied reasoning in discursive thought. Moral trust authenticates our inferential interpretations of what is experienced and sufficiently connects us with the Infinite.

Reasoning distinguished from Final Reason.

Indeed, mere argument seems to be a mark of finitude in the intelligence that is obliged to have recourse to it. To minds able to comprehend all things in all their relations in one intellectual grasp, inferential thought would be a superfluity. We have a faint illustration of this even in human experience. Inventive genius discerns in a flash of intellectual insight truth to which a less comprehensive intellect needs to be conducted, by slow processes of syllogism and calculated comparison of facts. The dogmatist in controversy, who never dreams that his favourite premisses need justification or admit of criticism, is an example of the mere arguer: argument is worthy of respect only when it is used as a human instrument for unfolding truth. It makes explicit what is implied in premisses that may be false; and the highest minds often see at once what others have to be led to by steps of reasoning. We are told of a great mathematician that he could recognise intuitively as axioms truths which Euclid slowly evolves as conclusions, through long trains of demonstration.

Finite intelligence is a succession of conscious acts and states.

Again. The living mind that man employs is one in which conscious states or acts succeed one another in a continuous series; for life as we have it is constant change. Our daily consciousness is a procession of blended thought, feeling, and volition. Can we suppose that anything like this is true of God? Is a succession of ever-changing conscious acts going on continuously in the Universal Power, contemporaneously with our own embodied conscious acts, so that the divine succession of changing conscious states is without beginning and

without end? Surely this must be an inadequate way of thinking about what we in our ignorance call "mind" in God? The relation of time to eternity, in whatever way it is approached, is the mystery of mysteries. A conscious life that lasts for millions of years *is* supposable, though it transcends distinct human imagination: *personal life that has no beginning and no end, passes human understanding.*

The reflective circle which we have traversed.

Thus far we find ourselves only on the shore of the infinite ocean that contains the mysteries in which a human conception of God, and of Man and Nature in their final relation to God, is at last paralysed. We are travelling by the human road, which is as it were at the side: we cannot sound the divine depth at the centre. In the end we may even return to the place from which we started in "the simple creed of childhood," with its three primary data; but on our return we should see all the three in a brighter light. The path which at first view seems to lead to scepticism, pursued to the end brings men back to common-sense idealised. "Atheism," as Bacon says, "is rather in the lip than in the heart of man," so that "depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion," if a little "inclineth them to atheism." As to this, one might say, with regard to the divine meaning of human life, what Philonous in the Dialogue says about *his* question, concerning the meaning of the world of Matter: "I do not pretend to be a setter up of new notions. My endeavours tend only to unite and place in a clearer light truth which was before shared between the vulgar and philosophers. You see the water of yonder fountain, how it is forced upwards in a round column and a certain height, at which it breaks and falls back into the basin out of which it arose—its ascent as well as descent proceeding on the same uniform law or principle of gravitation. Just so, the principles which, at first view, lead to scepticism, pursued to a certain point, bring men back to common-sense."

Philosophy consum-

Are we not finding that this is so, in our journey through speculative systems and sceptical speculation towards the

underlying faith which sustains human experience? I am trying to approach with faithfulness to evidence the deepest and truest interpretation of human experience. A religious interpretation of the universe is with the chief thinkers from Plato to Hegel its most real interpretation. When nature is seen to be God acting, and the evolving universe is recognised as the revelation of God, collision between advancing science and religious faith is not possible. So with the poet we can at the end— mated in Theology.

"Raise
The song of thanks and praise
. . . For those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realised.

For there are found in man—

"High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised!"

And latent in man's spirit are—

"Those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing:
Uphold us—cherish—and have the power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the Eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never.
Hence in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither—
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

I proceed to show how latent faith and hope in omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent Goodness is tacitly the indispensable constituent of a reasonable experience, the constant spring of religious emotion, and the origin of "peace which passeth understanding."

LECTURE IV.

PERFECT GOODNESS PERSONIFIED.

Theistic Philosophy.

THUS far I have tried to awaken reflection to the human issues involved in "Natural Theology, in the widest sense of the term." For, the meaning, reality, and worth of religion, in any of its many historical forms, merges, as an intellectual inquiry, in the central question of philosophy, about the ethical value and mutual relations of the ego, the outward world, and the Universal Power. The demand for Natural Theology, not in the narrow but in the wide sense of "natural," is virtually a demand for the *rationale* of trust and hope in the Power we all have practically to do with, even in our daily experience through the five senses, and above all in our experience of moral agency. Natural Theology is not merely a psychology of religion, or a comparative science of different forms of essential religion, as they appear in the historical evolution. It embraces the *rationale* of the theistic faith of which religious life, with its doctrines and institutions, is the expression. This is Theistic Philosophy, with its eternal problems. In this I pretend to offer only aids to reflection for those who are trying, as so many now are, to think out for themselves the question of whether or not they are living and moving and having their being in an essentially divine universe,—in its final principle morally trustworthy—a revelation of God, more or less fruitfully interpreted by man.

The whole history of man may be read as the history

of a struggle between final distrust and final trust. The one when intrepidly pursued leads to sceptical alienation from a wholly uninterpretable universe; and life is then contemplated, according to the individual temperament, with Epicurean indifference or with pessimist despair. The other inclination is towards reconciliation with the universe, in hopeful moral faith; even if it must be faith combined with incomplete scientific understanding of Infinity, and with inability to translate itself into physically scientific imagination. Necessities of human nature hinder both the tendency to alienation and the tendency to perfect intellectual reconciliation from being carried to the extremes of speechless and motionless Nescience, on the one hand, or Omniscience, on the other. Men could not live even a life of sense if they treated the universe as *wholly* uninterpretable; and the *perfect* comprehension, which would supersede the inevitable incompleteness of faith, involves the deification of man.

Either sceptical alienation from a wholly uninterpretable universe, or conciliation with it through reasonable moral faith in the Universal Power.

The idea of the infinite in *quantity* that is irresistibly forced upon us when we try to understand perfectly the space through which our bodies move, the duration in which our lives are spent, and the causation which determines ceaseless change, is what introduces mystery at last into human experience. This idea of the infinite may nourish either sceptical despair or religious faith. Looked at in one way, it alienates man from the universe in which he finds himself: it shakes his trust in it, as in something that cannot be grasped, on account of its infinite size, as well as its physical unbeginningness and unendingness. Also the infinite causal regress and progress seems to evade an answer, when one asks for its moral character and purpose. This final incomprehensibility produces a perplexed assumption that life is meaningless, and the universe wholly uninterpretable, therefore outside beneficial intercourse; because we are for ever baffled by the mysteries involved in its immensity, eternity, and endless causation. Yet the same negative idea of infinity, or mysterious incompletability, under which all seems to lose itself at last in a causal

Omnipresence of the Infinite tends to a Sceptical or a Constructive issue, according to the way in which it is regarded.

mystery, becomes the very minister of moral or theistic faith, when what is causal mystery for the scientific understanding is handled in reverential humility: it is found to open room for, and even demand, moral trust in the Power that is at the root of all. For the conviction that man cannot become omniscient is then apt to make us see the reasonableness of an understanding of things that is at last determined by the substitute for omniscience found in our spiritual constitution. The universe is seen to be too mysterious for us to interpret even in part and physically, unless we submit understanding to the authority of human nature as a whole, in a human Faith which includes man emotional, and man acting supernaturally—as well as man thinking scientifically, and at last necessarily baffled by final mystery in so thinking. The littleness of self, and the mystery of the physical evolution, are relieved by the religious sense of infinite reality, with the element of *venture*, which impossibility of Omniscience necessarily involves. In this disposition of mind it seems as if—

> "Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
> Is with Infinitude, and only there;
> With hope it is, hope that can never die,
> Effort and expectation and desire,
> And something evermore to be."

Illustrations of the Destructive and the Constructive influence of the idea of Infinity.

Thus its quantitative infinity, or physical incompletableness, makes the final problem of the universe look foreign to the scientific understanding; and, at its point of view, envelops us and our surroundings at last in the impenetrable darkness which dissolves moral trust. Yet, otherwise regarded, this necessary margin of mystery becomes the light of life; the explanation of the final trust, instead of perfect science, in which human life has to be lived. One finds the Infinite casting its dark shadow in Lucretius and in David Hume, in Schopenhauer and Herbert Spencer: Philo, in Hume's 'Dialogues concerning Natural Religion,' is Scottish spokesman of those who judge reality unapproachable on account of its mysterious infinity. But infinity turns its divine

side to Plato and Pascal, to Descartes and Bacon and Locke, to Kant and Hegel and Lotze, and to the great religious thinkers of Christendom; it unconsciously inspires martyrs and saints of the Catholic Church; it is tacitly present even in the physical faith of the leaders of modern natural science, and in the common experience of the senses in all human beings.

Atheism, Theism, and Pantheism, as competitive final conceptions.

Modern thought confronts us with three answers to the final question about the character of the Omnipresent or Universal Power. One of these is the atheistic or agnostic, which professes inability to find any intelligible Power at the root of the temporal evolution in which we find ourselves involved: human experience seems a wholly unintelligible flux—a succession of events with an appearance of order which may not be lasting. Opposite to this is the religious or theistic conception, according to which, when adapted in form to modern ideas, the evolving universe is the constant expression of ever-active moral reason—so that we are living and moving and having our being in a perfect moral providence; and our final relation to the operative Power is at last personal and ethical, involving moral relations. Intermediate between the chaotic universe of the sceptic, and the morally or spiritually adapted universe of theism, is the pantheistic final conception of an impersonal, non-moral, necessitated universe; in course of evolution by Unknowable Power, the supposed centre of the unethical natural causation, which gives a sort of continuity to the perpetual flux;—a continuity supposed to imply that one thing somehow comes into existence through another thing, into which it may be refunded, and in which all existences are only non-moral *things*, not *persons* or moral agents. Personality, with its implicate of moral agency or responsibility, is excluded, as that for which there is no room: physical causality instead of spiritual morality is the last word regarding existence, when emptied of moral trustworthiness and ethical relations. This is one form of the pantheistic conception of the universe. Those who adopt this final conception are commonly found fluctu-

ating between the universal nescience of the total sceptic and the tranquil trust in providential moral order of the theist, in proportion as the physical pantheism declines into total doubt, or becomes invigorated by acceptance of some of the ethical postulates that constitute theism.

Which of these three is the most reasonable attitude?

The spirit of the time asks which of these three attitudes reason justifies, as the final interpretation of man's life in Nature. Must we be alienated from what we experience, in a feeling of the ultimate meaninglessness of the whole, or is a divine reconciliation possible, on reasonable terms? If the last, what is the most real reconciliation that a good man can reach—with a view to co-operating as it were with the Omnipresent Power, in the infinite or finally mysterious universe of reality; and how may this be best expressed in terms of philosophy? Is it a wholly physical relation of one *thing* to another *thing;* or must it be conceived as the relation of a *person* to a *Person* — myself in personal relation to Perfect Goodness personified?

Am I only a thing, or am I a person?

The answer to this question involves an answer to another:—Am *I* only a *thing*, or am I also a *person?* Am I obliged to believe that *I* originate acts for which I can reasonably be blamed or praised; or must I think of what are called *my* acts in a wholly physical or non-moral way; finding that they are not really mine, but vaguely manifestations of Unknowable Power—there being no act that comes into existence for which I alone am responsible? Is the Universal Power manifested only in and through continuous sequences in *things?* May not this Power be more fully and characteristically revealed in and through moral agents, called *persons;*—so far independent of the Universal Power as that each of them is *able to bring into existence either what ought or what ought not to exist?*

And therefore finally in a moral relation to Active Moral Reason?

I must now ask emphatically, whether the deepest and truest interpretation of human experience is, that in which all is regarded merely as physical or non-moral —in which self-conscious agency itself is only a physical event in the continuous natural evolution? Is not a deeper and truer final interpretation needful, according to which all is finally unfolded in the light of moral

reason, popularly called conscience, with its sense of remorse for what is ill done personally, and its absolute imperativeness? If this last is the final relation of the three primary data, we then find ourselves in a universe that is *physically* unintelligible in the end, in its regress into the unbeginning past, and its progress into the unending future; but which, notwithstanding this quantitative infinity, inevitably assumes towards us moral trustworthiness and practical intelligibility, as the revelation of Perfect Moral Reason;—so that its secret, concealed from natural science in the final mystery of physical causality, is revealed (by implication) for all human purposes. Is not this the final attitude, which I *ought* in faith to adopt? It is to treat the universe as the revelation to me of perfect moral Personality, and not merely as an unbeginning and unending succession of physical changes. Is not this the interpretation which conscience and religion, when developed, put upon what would otherwise be at last a physical as well as moral chaos? Moral personification of the physically infinite universe, translates its scientifically insoluble causal problem into one that may be morally or humanly solved. Natural science leaves us at last in an infinite sphere, the centre of which is everywhere and the circumference nowhere. Conscience, with its implicates of personified moral obligation, and spirituality in man and God, enables man to read the daily drama of life, in the gradual evolution of inorganic and organic nature, as finally intercourse of moral being with the Moral Power thus revealed; and shows us ourselves to ourselves as living in what is more than a physical succession, because also, under its highest ideal, the perfect order of moral Providence.

So that moral Reason practically resolves for man the final physical mystery of unbeginning and

Thus moral reason teaches us not only that the Universal Power exists, but what the character of the Universal Power must be. It expresses, not the meaningless voice of surrounding incognisable Power, but the hopeful voice of surrounding morally trustworthy Power; a voice that absolutely sustains the faith-venture in a natural order that will not finally put us to confusion, when we trust it, either in the actions of common life, or in our scientific

unending change.

verifications;—inasmuch as it is realised as providential activity of perfect goodness, instead of finally inexplicable physical necessity. In this recognition of perfect goodness at the root of all, I find myself *at home* everywhere, because everywhere in a trustworthy universe, which gives to its most distant place, and its remotest time, a significance and friendliness that transforms and reconciles the otherwise alienating physical infinite. This is the light, that "lighteth every man that cometh into the world — the peace of God that passeth understanding." One may "take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost part" of the universe, only to find *there* the same personified goodness which is the supreme conception *here*, and so may everywhere recognise and rest in God. In this sense "God dwelleth within all things, above all things, beneath all things,—above by power, beneath by sustentation, within by subtlety,—ruling above, containing below, encompassing without, penetrating within,—everywhere sustaining by ruling, ruling by sustaining, penetrating by encompassing, encompassing by penetrating." This is the language of religion, especially in Christian religion, with its emphatic proclamation of infinite mercy as the implicate of infinite goodness; with consequent implication of the purpose of Perfect Goodness to make all bad persons in the universe good, so far as their personal power to make themselves bad permits. The crude ideas of religion in children, or in the childhood of the race, and the inferior conceptions of primitive morality, are really irrelevant to the validity of the unfolded religious conception. Its justification lies in what it is found to imply: this is not rightly discredited by the meanness or incoherence of many manifestations of religion. The crude and repulsive forms which the contents and implicates of either physical or spiritual experience at first and afterwards assumed must not prejudice them at their present stage, or in a still fuller unfolding. The mathematical calculus is not treated as illusion because infants and tribes of savages have confused ideas of number. The postulates on which educated intelligence now relies are presented in history in various degrees: we accept

them in their rationally articulated form, not in their rude embryo state. And so we find God in the idea of Goodness as now enriched by experience; and Personality becomes included in the final conception, because Moral Obligation and Divine Goodness must be taken as vitalised, to be intelligible. The issue, not the beginning and the halting progress in the past, is what is truly significant for us. The human organism may have come naturally out of protoplasm; but *man* is not mere protoplasm *now*, as we find him personified in great physical discoverers, or in moral and religious genius.

Kantian moral Theism.

That the final interpretation of Nature is reasonably taken under a morally religious conception, not under a wholly physical one, is, I think, not inconsistent with Kantian philosophy; although Kant has been claimed by Huxley as one of the two chief pioneers of modern agnosticism, on the ground of the destructive criticism which Kant directs against purely logical proof of God. His analysis of scientific reason seems to end in showing that absurdity is involved in every endeavour to interpret the riddle of the universe. Whether its final mystery is approached cosmologically, in the argument for a Divine Cause, or teleologically, in the argument for a Divine Designer, or ontologically, in abstract reason, it refuses to yield its secret to human understanding. And if Kant had ended with this destructive criticism, his authority might be produced in support of agnostic despair; for one can find as little morally religious satisfaction in principles of abstract reason as in a view of things as finally accidental. But Kant, I think, meant more than this: his philosophy in its completeness is not necessarily inconsistent with its beginning. Scientific understanding is not the whole of reason. If man were *only* physically scientific, the secret of the world would be so much out of his reach that he could not justify the moral confidence that is implied even in his interpretations of external nature. For nature, with its infinity in space and duration, and its final causal mystery, becomes incapable of being trustfully

handled by man, when its final problem is regarded as a *wholly physical* problem. The unbeginning and unending material rebels against the limits of an intelligence measured by sensuous quantity. When finite intelligence is thus required to do infinite work, it must either become paralysed by paradoxes that arise in its attempt to image the necessarily unimaginable—to subordinate eternity to time, or immensity to place, as the physical speculator has to do when he resolves to dispose of them only physically. Man in the fulness of his being — man moral and religious, as well as man the scientific observer —must be in exercise, when he is confronted with the final question; and a religious conception of the whole, in which the physical one merges in the end, is what has to be looked for, in intelligence like the human, that is intermediate between omniscience and nescience.

Physical or scientific reason culminates in moral reason.

Natural science, accordingly, is arrested by reason when the naturalist proceeds to take the final question within his own province. The check is administered, Kant's reasoning seems to imply, by showing the contradictions in which we are landed, if we insist upon approaching the infinite reality, not with our entire spiritual humanity, but only with the data and presuppositions of reason as measured by sense. Faith in physical order gives support indeed to the verified hypotheses on which scientific progress turns; but cosmical faith may mislead in the end, unless man can reasonably put eternal trust in the moral perfection of the Universal Power; and regard experience, not as an aimless procession of sequences, which *may* in the end play him false, but as manifested moral providence. Even physical interpretation, in its faith in the steadiness of order, and the adaptation of natural order to human intelligence, proceeds tacitly upon a moral and religious conception of the Whole. *Human* nature forces us to acknowledge in existence more than *physical* nature, if man is more than sentient.

For physical faith in natural order presupposes

This finally religious meaning of the temporal drama cannot be logically proved: but physical order, assumed in all scientific verification, is assumed *without reason* when religious faith in the perfect goodness of the Uni-

versal Power is withdrawn: without this deeper faith, the temporal process may be supposed at any time to subside into chaos, to the confusion of intelligence and moral reason; so that the basis even of physical inference may turn out to be a broken reed. The agnostic naturalist is expressing unconfessed moral faith when he proceeds upon the validity of "verification"; for he is taking for granted that scientific intelligence will not be put to confusion when it shows its trust in the Universal Power by inductive ways of dealing with events. Their *past* order of sequence is not reason, unless it is so reinforced by moral faith as that nature is accepted as manifestation of Active Moral Reason, and therefore incapable of imposing upon us diabolical illusion, when we daily trust in its physical uniformities.

moral confidence in the Universal Power.

An idea of this sort was perhaps unconsciously at the bottom of the vindication of the veracity of human nature and its faculties, which Descartes hints, in his autobiographical explanation of his own philosophical recovery from a state of tentative doubt about everything. How do I know, he had asked himself, that even in what my faculties most certainly assure me of, *they* may not after all be deluding me? My relation to my surroundings may be finally either determined blindly, or determined, not according to perfect moral reason, but to diabolical caprice. For instance, am I reasonably sure that I have a body, only because I see my body; or that other persons exist, only because I cannot help believing this? How can I justify the faith which I indulge in, that the customary course of nature is so uniform and reliable that I may expect similar issues to those which were evolved under like conditions in the past? Or what assurance can one have when he looks back into the past in memory; or into the distant or future in scientific calculation? Why may not the scientific understanding deceive in the future, even although it may never happen to have deceived in the past? How do I know that waking perception is not as illusory as a dream in sleep? For all these *may* be experiences in a universe in which

A moral trust in the changing universe of reality unconsciously implied in Descartes's argumentative vindication of the human faculties.

the Universal Power is blind, or insane, or perhaps a diabolical providence.

The trustworthiness of experience presupposes that the existence presented to us in our senses and in consciousness is fit to be believed in.

But if, instead of this, I deliberately presuppose perfectly good omnipotent and omnipresent Power, eternally operative, I am only giving expression to the faith that is at the root of all other faith, deeper than which I cannot go. If God, or Perfect Goodness, is supreme, external nature and my original faculties cannot delude me. For this would be to suppose that the Universal Nature and my nature are in contradiction, so that I might be obliged throughout my experience to believe a lie. The presupposition that forbids the entrance of this total scepticism is the presupposition that God or Perfect Goodness is omnipresent and omnipotent. The trustworthiness of my original nature, and the interpretability of universal nature, *presuppose* the constant action of morally perfect Power at the heart of the Whole.

This is not a conclusion from premisses, but recognition of a necessary postulate.

This is not direct argumentative proof: when we try to make it so it becomes circular reasoning. It is only the conscious expression of a postulate, without *tacit* practical assent to which human knowledge and human agency must dissolve in total doubt. The truth that one finds in the heart of attempts to vindicate the trustworthiness of our original faculties, or common rational sense, is, that God — Omnipotent Goodness — is unconsciously presupposed in the reliableness of experience. If I do not, at least tacitly, indulge in this moral faith, I cannot even make a beginning in anything. For unless in fact I am justified in interpreting the universe as the manifestation of what, in its ultimate principle, is personified moral order and perfect goodness, phenomena cannot be interpreted even physically—as in the natural sciences, and in the common-sense perceptions and acts of daily life. Agnosticism as to ethical religion carries in it universal agnosticism, including physically scientific paralysis as well as religious paralysis. Intrepidly pursued it is total anarchy or lawlessness. Cosmic faith depends on ethical trust in the universe of reality; and this moral faith, in its religious form, becomes theistic. Otherwise even what original human nature cannot help

believing may be false—an illusory necessity. Unless we take for granted that we are ushered at birth into perfect moral providence, our interpretations of our temporal experience may in the end put us to confusion. One cannot logically argue all this, by direct argumentative appeal to premisses in which it is logically contained; but one virtually *assumes* God in practically presupposing the absolute reign of order. When I am sure that life cannot be a lie, this means that I cannot help believing that God exists—that goodness is supreme and eternal. I am tacitly assuming that the whole cannot be a devil's drama. Faith in final ethical harmony—in perfect moral trustworthiness at the root of experience—is the ultimate practical postulate of human life.

Mr Herbert Spencer.

The commingling of scientific ignorance with religious faith—the infinitely unknowable God, yet presupposed in all experience—suggests the negation accepted by Mr Herbert Spencer as the principle of his synthetic philosophy. I name with the utmost respect this distinguished representative of philosophical or theological inquiry, to which he has devoted a long life, with indomitable intellectual persistency, and a noble honesty of purpose of which there are few examples—combined with a largeness of speculative aim and architectonic disposition that, even at a distance, reminds one of Aristotle or Hegel, and among Englishmen of Bacon, although one misses the splendour of philosophical imagination, and the classical culture of the author of the 'Advancement of Learning.' Mr Spencer attracts the average intelligence much as Auguste Comte found response in a like popular constituency in France, and then throughout the world. Dissimilar in many ways, these philosophers are not unlike in the fortune of their repute—undue depreciation at first, in the academical coteries of Europe; exaggerated credit since among the multitude. As Comte has been called the philosopher of the half-educated, so too it may be said of Mr Spencer, without disrespect, for the office is a high one. They will both in time take their due place, intermediate between extremes of depreciation and deification.

Science and Religious Nescience.

The consummation of Mr Spencer's speculation is that a dual universe of material and mental appearances is the temporal manifestation of eternally Unknowable Power. Accumulated arguments and illustrations pave the way to his conclusion that the Power underlying appearances is totally and for ever incognisable, from the limitation of human intelligence. Common-sense, he seems to say, postulates an ultimate Power; science proves that this Power cannot be what we can think; psychology shows why we cannot, and yet are compelled to believe in it; and in this final assertion of a Reality utterly inscrutable, Religion finds an assertion essentially coinciding with its own. We are mentally obliged to regard every phenomenon in experience as the manifestation of Power by which we are acted on. Omnipresence is indeed unthinkable; yet, as experience discloses no bounds to the universe, we are unable to think limits to omnipresent Power, but science teaches us that it is Power Incomprehensible. And this conviction of Incomprehensible Power is what gives rise to religion and expresses itself in worship. Religion, he suggests, has vainly struggled to unite more or less science with its inevitable nescience, while Science has vainly tried to conquer this religious nescience, as though it were able to convert it into Science. Permanent peace between Religion and Science is possible only when Science becomes convinced that its explanations are proximate and relative, and when Religion becomes convinced that it is only the sentiment of that which must be for ever inexplicable. Accordingly, Mr Spencer would divorce Science and Religion in the distribution of goods. He would assign to Science all human knowledge, such as it seems to be, and reserve all human ignorance, such as it must be, for Religion. Religion is the Unintelligible Feeling in which Knowledge that is only seeming inevitably merges at last.

Empty sense of Unknowable Power, as man's

Consciousness of being always in the presence of Unknowable Power seems to be Mr Spencer's final attitude towards the universe in which we are having our being. Strictly interpreted, this is thorough-going agnosticism—

total nescience: and this, as I have repeatedly suggested, leaves no room for man to express himself at all about anything otherwise than in the form of a question—if even thus; for wholly sceptical interrogation necessarily dies in birth: it can only be a still-born question. Yet the philosophy of Mr Spencer consists of more than universal questioning. Its negative assertion of final Unknowableness is combined with many positive assertions. The "Unknowable" Power is affirmed positively to be a "manifested" Power: we are told that "the Power *manifested in the universe* is unknown and unknowable." But how can Power that makes *itself* "manifest," in our material and spiritual experience, be *wholly* unknown? That looks like the self-contradictory assertion, that the Power is at once manifested and not-manifested — that we know that it exists, but without being able to predicate anything of it, not even existence, or existence only when the word is emptied of all meaning. That which manifests itself must be known, as far as the manifestation or revelation goes. That the Infinite Reality stretches *without limit beyond* the manifestations that are presented in the physical, moral, and religious experience of *men* — including of course the rational postulates involved in this experience—need not transform the light that is *within the experience* into the darkness of total ignorance. Even if it could do this, so long as there is light enough remaining to enable one to make the one negative assertion of its eternal unknowableness, he must have enough of knowledge about the Power manifested in the universe to justify this negation. But Mr Spencer retains a good deal more than wholly negative knowledge. His Unknowable Power *reveals itself* in ways that, on his own showing, admit of a hierarchy of sciences being formed, which interpret some of its experienced manifestations. And the human sciences of the revelations which the Unknowable Power makes of itself are presented by Mr Spencer in elaborate co-ordination. The Unknowable Power is so much manifested that man is able to generalise its proceedings—constructive and destructive—and thus to describe note-

final attitude towards the universe in which he lives.

worthy characteristics of its customary behaviour. It seems, by his account, to be a Power which, in its sensuous manifestations, is revealing itself, slowly and gradually, in evolutionary order. At a stage in this process, he finds states of human consciousness emerging, in persistent correlation with organic motions; so that external phenomena are accompanied or followed by correlative psychical phenomena. The hierarchy of the natural sciences, in which those manifestations of the "Unknowable Power" are co-ordinated, is surely a standing proof that the Universal Power is not in every way unknowable. The verified contents of the sciences of matter and mind are a considerable contribution to practical knowledge of the Universal Power, with implied trust too in its steady conduct, at least in man's physical intercourse with it.

"Manifested" Power cannot be wholly unknown and unknowable.

How far the revelations of the Universal Power that *are* within reach — in the physical, æsthetical, moral, and religious experience of men, with the indispensable spiritual implicates of that experience — how far these carry man on the way to omniscience or infinite knowledge, is of course a further question. Enough that the Universal Power is not *wholly* unmanifested or unrevealed. It is doubtless only a physical God and a physical religion that we have in the sequences of sense-presented evolution; interpreted in the sort of natural theology commonly called natural science; sustained by the attenuated religious faith which tacitly enters even into physical faith. For this gives only a boundless and endless universe of *things*—not recognising *persons* at all, in the moral meaning of personality.

Oscillation between Pantheism and Pyrrhonism.

This philosophy seems to oscillate between the phase of Pantheism which interprets the universe as a partial revelation of infinite non-moral Power, and the Nescience of total scepticism. Yet there is in it a tacit theistic faith—so far as nature is treated as worthy of confidence, reliable, what may be taken for a true revelation of the Universal Power;—so far a trustworthy universe; not either a blind or a diabolical universe, that may at any moment paralyse human activity and intelligence—perhaps

by transforming itself into chaos and still keeping *us* in insane life.

Infinite or mysterious moral Personality.

Mr Spencer ends in the cosmic faith, that men are *things*, causally connected under Unknowable Power, but without acknowledging, in moral and religious faith, that men are *persons*, or moral agents, in moral correlation with eternal Omnipotent Goodness. Because man cannot comprehend the Universal Power in its incompletable *physical* order; and because he finds himself, when he tries to do this, involved in a tissue of contradictory propositions, therefore nothing can be really known, either speculatively or practically,—this seems to be the outcome of Mr Spencer's argument. I find myself in contact and collision with an evolving and finally dissolving world, of which I am a part — an unbeginning and unending evolution—in which I cannot by all the methods of physical inquiry discover any final meaning or purpose: therefore, I must dismiss as unwarranted the religious interpretation, in which all is accepted as the manifestation of morally trustworthy, or, as we might say, personal agency. A theistic final interpretation seems to mean for Mr Spencer, that the Universal Power must have a personal life; so much like man's own that it is a theatre of successive conscious states. And as a person, whether called finite or infinite, can be conscious—so he takes for granted — of only one finite state at a time, Divine Omniscience is dismissed as an absurdity. The Omniscience that has to comprehend Boundlessness in space and time cannot consist, it is concluded, with personal consciousness.

Is a Divine Brain needed in a theistically interpretable universe?

The inference, on ground of this sort, that the universe does not admit of being at last religiously interpreted by man, reminds one of the quaint conceit of Du Bois Raymond, who refused to believe in God until he could find *somewhere in space* a huge brain, like the human, with warm arterial blood and ganglia, proportioned to the greatness of a Creative Mind that was dogmatically supposed to need cerebral organisation. As if the Universal Power could not be treated by us as personified Goodness, unless embodied in an organism like the human. It seems

hardly less reasonable to insist, that if man's final relation to God is moral or personal, Perfect Goodness must be the subject of successive conscious states of personal life like those of human intelligence.

Examples of a human knowledge of that which passes human understanding and speculative imagination.

A human knowledge of what at last infinitely passes human knowledge—practical knowledge of what is at last physically incognisable — is illustrated all round the horizon of human experience. Take examples. One can demonstrate the geometrical relations of figures; yet the Immensity toward which all finite places, shapes, and sizes inevitably carry thought is found to transcend human understanding; but human understanding does not, on this account, reject Euclid as a bundle of unwarranted and illusory conclusions. Again, I am obliged to think of events as before and after, and I find that I can make reasonable use of a chronological table; yet I cannot fathom the mystery of the two eternities into which I am necessarily carried. Further, the manifestations of natural causality presented in sense are interpretable in science, and for practical human purposes, although they are all at last involved in the impenetrable causal mystery of unbeginning regress and endless progress. *Si non rogas, intelligo.* In those cases I understand, if I am not obliged, as the condition of understanding, to think in images the mysteries into which they resolve themselves. Is it otherwise with man's religious faith in the Universal Power? This too suggests questions which man can as little answer, about a Being as inaccessible as Immensity is from the spaces that can be comprehended in figures, or as Eternity is from the periods that can be measured in tables of chronology. I am not obliged to be agnostic as regards either the places or the periods, because Immensity and Eternity raise a multitude of questions which man can never answer. May not moral and religious experience of persons, including its necessary postulates, reveal what is even eternally true—*relatively* eternal truth — while its ultimate problems perplex man with contradictions, if he tries to conquer them. I do not see why, "unless I wish to be deceived," I must surrender as delusion either my physical or my religious trust, only because human knowledge cannot

become infinite intelligence; or because man's *intelligo* disappears, when he is asked to transform it into the Omniscience from which faith and mystery are wholly eliminated.

Are men therefore finally reduced to agnostic despair?

Those who, with Mr Spencer, turn away from a finally uninterpretable universe in despair, so think and act, he tells us pathetically, "not because they wish to do this, but because they must": self-deception seems to him the only alternative to despair. He acknowledges that "there is no pleasure in the consciousness of being an infinitesimal bubble, on a globe which is itself infinitesimal, compared with the totality of things. Those on whom the unpitying rush of changes inflicts sufferings, which are often without remedy, find no consolation in the thought that they are at the mercy of blind forces, which cause, indifferently, now the destruction of a sun, and now the death of an animalcule. Contemplation of a universe which is without conceivable beginning or end, and without intelligible purpose, yields no satisfaction. The desire to know what it all means is no less strong in the agnostic than in others, and raises sympathy with them. Failing to find any interpretation himself, he feels a regretful inability to accept the interpretation others offer." Yet these striking sentences do not after all describe a wholly uninterpretable universe. For they imply knowledge that the Power everywhere at work *is* "blind," and that man lives on a globe that is "infinitely small" compared with what it seems is known to be a "totality": they imply, too, that enough is knowable about the Universal Power to justify assertions about "realities which must not be abandoned for deceiving fancies." They imply trust in the physical universe; they discard as self-deception the religious trust that is the guarantee of the physical—both faiths logically unproved, but both justified in practical reason, inasmuch as without them human life is baseless, and its ideal unapproachable.

Sensuous Faith and Spiritual Faith.

Religious faith in the Power that is universally operative in the ever-changing universe is not equally developed in all men, nor so widely among men as the degree of faith involved in natural science. How and why is this so? Coleridge suggests an answer: "It is not in

our power to disclaim our nature as sentient beings; but it is in our power to disclaim our nature as moral beings." In recognising the finally ethical and divine constitution of the cosmos, "I assume a something, the proof of which no man can give to another, yet every man may find for himself. If any man assert that *he* cannot find it, I am bound to disbelieve him. I cannot do otherwise without unsettling the very foundations of my own moral nature. The reasoners on *both* sides commence by taking something for granted. But the pure physicist assumes what, according to himself, he neither is nor can be under an obligation of moral reason to assume. If he uses the word obligation, he can mean only physical necessity. To overthrow faith in aught higher than physical necessity is the very purpose of his argument. He desires you only to *take for granted* that all reality is included in physical nature, and he may then safely defy you to ward off his conclusion—that nothing real is excluded." That faith in its spiritual degree often fails to rise into consciousness, is exemplified by contrast, in the men who are types of man at his best and highest—who represent that in humanity which, while normal, is not universally awakened—felt and seen by saint and prophet—in others dormant or obscured. This recalls words long ago uttered in Palestine —"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Summary.

Quem nosse vivere. The inevitable postulate of Perfect Omnipresent Goodness, presupposed in the reliability of experience, implies the Eternal Gospel — God is love. This, therefore, is the tacit moral postulate of all human intercourse with the Universe, through experience and its implicates. The gospel of infinitely merciful love, implied in omnipotent goodness, is latent in the constitution of man; which accordingly responds to the Christian consciousness of this love, finding that faith in God may become the perfection of human intelligence. Omnipotent Goodness is at once the tacit moral presupposition and highest outcome of human experience. This may be recognised in another way, at the point of view we are next to occupy.

LECTURE V.

OMNIPOTENT GOODNESS.

Does not reasonable experience in the universe presuppose Omnipotent Goodness at the root of things and persons?

RELIGIOUS life as it unfolds in man makes him personify Perfect Goodness, the ideal of personal or moral agency. This religious recognition of absolute moral goodness constitutes theistic faith. It is unconditional trust in eternal moral providence that I find tacitly at the bottom of the recognition of even physical trustworthiness in experience, which is postulated in the actions of men, and in their natural science. Must not even physical faith dissolve without an implied moral and religious trust? Unless men practically take for granted that natural sequence is neither a temporary accident nor the contrivance of diabolical Power, they cannot interpret nature, nor employ nature in their service, in the spirit of the *Novum Organum*. When I try to think out and apply the wholly agnostic conception of the universe, I find myself becoming scientifically and morally paralysed. The intelligibility of nature, upon which our use of it depends, disappears in the dissolution of faith in the Universal Power. Man is rescued from total scepticism through trust in the divine synthesis. The individual ego and the outer world are unintelligible and impracticable, unless Omnipotent Goodness is tacitly presupposed. Is man doing justice to his true self and to reason, when he leaves dormant the unconditional moral trust, which unconsciously sustains his experience; or when he tries to get rid of the data of conscience, which makes perfectly good or absolutely reasonable Will supreme?

Theistic or moral faith is tacitly postulated in experience.

These questions lead to further investigation of theistic trust, as man's final attitude towards the universe. This may be contemplated from the point of view occupied by those who offer "proofs" of the existence of God. But the word proof must be used in a qualified meaning when so applied. If theistic faith is itself the implied condition of *all* proof, it must be incapable of scientific proof. "Did you deduce *your own* being?" asks Coleridge. "Even this is less absurd than the conceit of deducing the Divine Being. Never would you have had the notion had you not had the idea—rather had not the idea worked in you like the memory of a name which we cannot recollect, yet feel that we have; which reveals its existence in the mind only by a restless anticipation; and proves its *a priori* actuality by the almost explosive instantaneity with which it is welcomed and recognised." Moral trust in the Universal Power is the postulate of a finite experience. Yet it may have its consistency with reason philosophically unfolded. Are the difficulties involved in its action at the root of human nature as great as the difficulties involved in its agnostic suspension? Anyway, in dealing with the rationale of the religious conception of human life, philosophy is dealing with something that is already involved in man's experience—already manifesting itself in human feeling, conduct, and thought. We do not need to bring it there by reasoned proofs: indeed, we never bring it into existence in the form of a conclusion directly evolved from finite premisses. It exists spontaneously beneath experience, although its conscious growth in the individual may be repressed, or at least arrested in a rudimentary stage. The verified inductions of science show unproved moral trust in spontaneous exercise; but inquiry into the reasonableness of this trust in the Universal Power is always open to the philosophical analyst who cares to reflect upon what he is actually living by. So too with the more distinctly religious faith, on which physical trust itself in the end depends. It operates before it is unfolded philosophically. Still it is open to the philosophic analyst to reduce to its elements the complex fact of

religious reliance on the final principle of the universe. He may inquire whether a faith deeper than the faith found in science is only an anachronism, likely to die out gradually in the fuller evolution of humanity; or, on the contrary, an inevitable implicate of experience, which becomes more enlightened in proportion to the advance of men in thoughtfulness and goodness.

Alleged cosmological, teleological, and ontological "proofs" of theism.

What are called "demonstrations" and "logical arguments" that "God exists" are really more or less successful analyses of the rational implicates of spontaneous trust in the Universal Power. On *what sort of Power* does faith rely; and are we justified in this absolute reliance? In what consists the reasonableness of the conception of perfectly good Power finally operative? These questions underlie so-called theistic "proofs," each of which takes its own way of showing the reasonableness of theistic faith. Thus one way of doing this is through what is virtually a philosophical analysis of the principle of causality—that principle on which man rests when he contemplates the universe of change; and this analysis is at the root of what is called "cosmological proof" of theism. Another way of showing the reasonableness of religious faith has been observation of obtrusive cases of natural adaptation of means to ends—especially ends that benefit man — final causes as they are ambiguously called. Adaptations of this sort, whether or not they are supposed universally to pervade evolving nature, at least present themselves strikingly in organised matter, animal and vegetable: the construction of the human eye is a favourite example. The universe is reported to abound in curious and useful superhuman contrivances, many of them signally adapted to promote human happiness, and in the long-run to improve man—towards whose individual evolution and education the whole planetary evolution seems to conspire; as if the world were contrived for, or culminated in, the evolution of man. In this we have the "teleological" explanation of religious faith, and the teleological way of developing the religious conception of the universe.

These venerable "proofs" are now commonly supposed

Kant's criticism of theistic logic.

to have encountered damaging intellectual handling on the part of Immanuel Kant. Ever since he criticised them, they have been more or less discredited. The discredit is probably not undeserved, if any of them is so misconceived as to be taken for a logical proof of man's moral or religious faith in the Universal Power. They are discredited so far as they are finite arguments that pretend to determine a conclusion which, being infinite or unconditioned, is not determinable by the logic of the understanding measured by sense. For reasoning becomes a tissue of paralogisms, when it tries to bring the infinite reality, as a finite quantity, under logical conditions that are adapted to what is finite. Yet those "proofs," when each is resolved into its principle, help to illustrate the reasonableness and humanity of theistic faith.

Is Theism involved in the Causal conception of the universe?

Take the Principle of Causality. Estimate the proof that God exists, because the world must be caused. May the theistic interpretation of the universe be treated as *faith in the final form and ultimate application of the causal principle?* In assuming, as we must, the dependence of every change upon a cause, are we not assuming its dependence *at last* on the only originating cause that enters as an implicate into human experience—that is to say, on Active Moral Reason, or perfectly Reasonable Will? Consider what causality *finally* means and involves. We all recognise causation as the universal implicate of experience in this ever-changing world: we unavoidably proceed in life on the supposition that, because we are living among changes, we must be living among causes. The causal relation is of all relations the most universal; and for natural science, physical causation is final. It is the category which comprehends all change under itself. Intelligence in man in a world of change gives the first signs of its activity in craving vaguely for causes.

Without faith in causality there could be no

But what sets human intelligence agoing in search of cause; and what is ultimately meant by the word cause, when it points to that of which intelligence is in quest? In an immutable universe there would be no need for the

craving, and no room for the idea, nor room therefore for a conscious life like man's; for with us consciousness necessarily involves change. It is the metamorphosis or continuous change to which all things and persons are subject, and through which they reveal to us their relations to one another, that raises in man the final question, *Why* all this is so? Human mind is awakened in this temporal evolution, in which man participates; and which, as far as we can see, is in process, if not in progressive amendment, from everlasting to everlasting. This was expressed by Heraclitus of old in the formula πάντα ῥεῖ—All things flow. The actual is the changeable: everything seems to be and yet not to be: it is at once being and becoming. By an irresistible necessity every event carries thought *beyond the event itself*, to some preceding form of existence out of which the event has emerged, as the evolved equivalent of its natural cause. For we have been gradually taught to believe in an equivalence or proportion between the event as an effect, and that event in the preceding form of its natural cause; so that whatever appears in the new form must have its due corresponding phenomenon in a form preceding, which custom calls its cause. Science rests on the unproved faith that this is so; for if this were not so, verification by experiment would be impossible: the organised knowledge of events which is called science could not come into conscious existence in human minds. Calculated comparisons, with a view to inductive generalisation, would lose their indispensable working postulate, if this "causal" connection between new forms of existence and their old forms were not a dependable connection. If there were no natural causality in the universe—no physical order—there could be no physical science, and no experience available for the conduct of life. The indispensable director amidst otherwise chaotic change would be wanting.

science of events.

For consider what inquisitive intelligence and the secular wants of men have secured for themselves, when the discovery is made that some phenomenon, otherwise an orphan in the universe, has found its parentage in cer-

The secular advantage of a working knowledge of

physical causes.

tain other phenomena. Increasing knowledge of constant relations between new phenomena and their old equivalents is the minister of happiness to mankind: human pains and pleasures are effects, all dependent on natural causes — on causes in the outside world, and then on those within the human organism; and men are able, so far, to direct the causal currents into useful channels. Man as the servant of nature, as Bacon advises us, can do so much, and so much only, as he has observed of the causal order of nature. Human knowledge of constant sequences and human power are correlatives. Where the natural cause is not perceived by man, the natural effect cannot be secured by man: nature to be commanded must be obeyed: that which in our thought is the cause is transformed in active life into our rule. It is only by obedience to the rules of the universe that man can live, in a universe that is undergoing constant metamorphoses—on which human thoughts, sensibilities, and overt actions are dependent. We are, without our leave, entangled while we live in the universal web of natural causation.

But discovery of natural causes leaves events finally unexplained; because every natural cause itself needs a predecessor, in endless regress.

Yet notwithstanding its obvious utility, the discovery of merely natural causes leaves the craving of human intelligence dissatisfied. For the predecessor out of which a change has naturally emerged, and of which the change is a metamorphosis, *itself* equally needs a causal predecessor. The discovered natural cause, being only a finite object, must itself be only an effect. In seeking for a natural cause the mind is seeking for what is necessarily unsatisfying. The cause to be found, if it is to give unconditional relief, must be other than the provisional causes registered in physical science; for each of these requires a preceding natural cause. The scientific discovery that oxygen and hydrogen are naturally the causal equivalent of water, or the discovery that heat is a conditional metamorphosis and equivalent of modes of motion, has brought the discoverer no nearer the satisfaction which his complete spiritual consciousness demands than he was before he reached them—notwithstanding the useful command of nature, which growing knowledge

of natural causes carries with it. The old form of each new phenomenon as much needs to be resolved into reason as the new form itself did; and when we have reached what physical science accepts as *its* ideal, we have still only enlarged our natural outlook by a wider empirical generalisation. The need for originating cause, which can alone satisfy reason, remains in other respects as urgent as before. The search for *wholly natural* causes is like the search for the source of a river that has *no* source. As in adding finite spaces to finite spaces, however vast the resulting space becomes, we are obliged to believe that we are no nearer Immensity or Boundlessness than we were when we began to add; or as millions of years form a duration that is really no nearer than a single moment is to the unbeginning and unending Duration,—so the endlessly regressive search for natural causes, with the discovery of more and more extensive physical laws, or customary uniformities, in the natural procedure, leaves us still in search of the operative Power omnipresent throughout the natural network. In truth natural causes and natural evolution of phenomena explain nothing. Response to the causal craving is only provisionally provided by them. They present an orderly procession of effects — not the Agent in the universal drama.

But is our feeling of dissatisfaction with this merely natural causation a reason for faith in Omnipotent Goodness?

But is the mere feeling of discomfort, occasioned by the insufficiency of natural causation, a sufficient reason for recognising more than an ultimately inexplicable natural causality? Is not this to indulge in a groundless conjecture — that since natural science cannot give all we desire, a divine Cause must exist; because without God our dissatisfaction must continue. Is not this to proceed upon the unproved postulate, that we cannot be living in a universe that is a constant source of disappointed desire? Are men entitled to conclude that because natural science gives only unbeginning and unending sequence, finally unexplained, there must—for our relief—be something more? Does it follow that because the material world appears to the sensuous understanding to be naturally in endless orderly sequence, there must

therefore exist Omnipotent Will, or Perfect Goodness eternally active?

Our feeling of restlessness, in the presence of a universe of natural causes *only*, in itself an insufficient reason for faith in God.

If all that could be found in this relation were only an uncomfortable feeling of causal dissatisfaction, the unsatisfied causal craving would surely be no sufficient rationale of faith in final omnipotence and goodness. Of the seemingly unbeginning and unending evolution of changing phenomena, only an insignificant portion can come within the personal experience of each man, or within the collective experience even of the human race. To go beyond this narrow experience, *on the ground of uneasy feeling*, looks like saying that there must be more than natural causation — that a wholly physical conception of the world must be fundamentally misleading—merely because the scientific supposition is *uncomfortable*, when we think it out. And if natural causality must be the only causality, there is no ground for faith in a finally satisfying Power: we must at last face endless change — that sceptical aspect of the Infinite, which dissolves moral trust in the idea of capricious temporal process—evolution without a constant morally trustworthy Evolver. The supposed cosmological proof of the reality of the Divine Evolver becomes only our vague feeling of dissatisfaction with all merely finite quantity.

While natural causation, exclusively looked at, conceals God, the spiritual constitution of Man reveals God.

But, while natural causes, taken as ultimate, conceal God, man, as moral agent, presents and reveals Power in the form of *originating* cause, personally responsible for effects. I should rather say that external nature conceals God, only if God is not otherwise revealed, as through spiritual experience. With this revelation, external nature itself *becomes* for us symbolic of the divine: each fresh discovery of a natural cause may then be interpreted as only a further and fuller revelation of the eternal moral Providence of which natural (so-called) "agency" is the effect and expression. *After* God has been found in the *moral* experience of man, which points irresistibly to intending Will, as the only known Cause that is unconditional or originating, the discovery, that this is the natural or provisional cause of that, is recog-

nised as the discovery that *this* is the divinely constituted sign, or constant antecedent, of *that*. The whole natural succession is then conceived as manifestation of Personal agency: the universe in its temporal process is seen to be reasonably interpretable as the constantly manifested moral activity of the universal Omnipresent Power; in a way to which our bodily organism, as dependent on our will, is in faint analogy — the human microcosm the symbol of the infinite Macrocosm.

For in our experience of man as morally responsible, we find what Power means.

I may still be asked what in reason justifies this deification of the ultimate issue of the causal demand? The existence of a vague feeling of discomfort is not enough. But we find in man more than dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of all natural causes. We find obligation to recognise *himself* as a *person*, or as the finally determining cause of changes in himself and in nature for which *he* is morally responsible. This experience throws deeper meaning into Causation, meaning derived from responsible Will, the only cause within human experience that is finally satisfying;—a cause which not only does not need a regress, but which even forbids us to go behind Will for explanation of acts for which the willing agent is answerable. Man exemplifies in his moral or immoral acts what a cause is that is really a cause, seeing that it cannot be in its turn an effect. He originates acts, so far as he can be praised or blamed.

As physical organisms, men share in the causal evolution, which morally or spiritually they transcend.

Regarded as visible organisms, men form part of the natural process: they can neither be praised nor blamed for being what they are necessarily, in virtue of an inherited organism. Man does not, as a visible organism, create himself: he is evolved according to natural law. But although organised naturally, he is found, under the natural evolution, to contain spiritually what is more than physical;—at least if one is justified in reason in attributing personal blame, for determination to act, or to refrain from acting. Conscience, like a finger-post, points to responsible agents of voluntary acts as, *in their moral relation to those acts*, examples, and the only examples, of causal agency that man comes in sight of; and it suggests that when we come in sight

of *this*, we have what may justify us in reading the universe in its continuous evolutionary process, morally and religiously, as well as physically and biologically.

In physical science the universe is interpreted with exclusive regard to the natural or caused causes which it contains.

Of course nature may also be read *only* physically, or strictly in terms of natural causation. It is possible, by abstraction of all that is spiritual in man, to withdraw moral colouring, as it were, from the procedure of events, and to treat the succession as non-moral. Indeed, natural science requires one to make this abstraction, on the principle of divided intellectual labour; and because its treatment of phenomena under moral conceptions might disturb that unbiassed search for physical causes or signs of changes, which is the office of the naturalist. Natural science has to find the physical sequences in the universe that are constant, without regard to the moral goodness or badness, or their originating cause.

Sinners and saints alike, in the light of wholly physical science.

Thus the molecular changes which succeed one another in the brain, nerves, muscles, and external organs of a murderer, when he is engaged in a murder, and also the molecular changes which occur in the brain, nerves, muscles, and external organs of a saint, which issue in an overt act of philanthropy, are, *for natural science*, alike non-moral or non-religious; they are contemplated out of relation to conscience and divine agency. The series of natural sequences in the visible organism of the murderer is scientifically as admirable as those of which the visible organism of the saint is the theatre. They are both interpreted under the same conception of natural causality; and the natural causes which the organism of the murderer illustrates are neither more moral nor more immoral in themselves than those which lead up to the most signal overt act of "altruism," or of religious adoration. The biology of the criminal makes natural science as well as the biology of the saint. Natural gravitation and natural evolution are neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy. They are methods according to which the Universal Power determines the procession of events.

The universe

Now, just as the physical process of growth, and the overt changes in the organisms of criminals and saints, are

in themselves indifferent to the moral conceptions under which they may be brought—in that deeper interpretation of the universe into which the ideas of moral obligation and personality enter—so too the continuous physical evolution of the universe of caused causes, which, for all we can tell, is an unbeginning and unending process, may in like manner be contemplated in abstraction from the omnipresent operative and responsible Power that pervades the whole; and therefore in abstraction from its moral and religious meaning. In all natural sciences this abstraction is made; leaving for their appropriated share in the interpretation of the world, the office of filling in hitherto undiscovered terms in the register of natural sequences, and the attainment in this way of more and yet more extensive physical generalisations. Each discovery in science is the discovery of something in the sequence of visible nature that was before concealed; with the often illustrated issue that persons are able to live more happily within the naturally determined machine. To think of the world as the natural process of organisation and disorganisation—the terms of which men are bound, by regard for science and for their comfort, to interpret according to the established sequences,—*this* is to think of things as the wholly physical inquirer does. But unless proof is forthcoming that a conception, higher than a physical one, yet in harmony with it, is not consistent with reason; unless the difficulty of a religious or optimist interpretation of the world can be shown to be greater than an atheistic or pessimist interpretation; unless the *homo mensura* principle, upon which—in an attenuated form—natural science itself rests, *forbids* the theistic interpretation,—I say, unless proof of this is forthcoming, what is unreasonable in the religious conception of the facts and laws which form the boast of modern science? To invest the discovered natural sequences with a moral and spiritual glory, by reading the whole, and in all its parts, in relation to what is highest in man, and not in relation to his sensuous intelligence only—this is not to discredit natural science but to invest it with a crown. "In the entrance of philosophy," says Bacon, "when the

of change, when only physically interpreted.

second causes, which are next unto the senses, do offer themselves to the mind of man, if it dwell and stay there, it may induce some oblivion of the Highest Cause; but when a man passeth on further, and seeth the dependence of causes, and the works of Providence, then, according to the allegory of the poets, he will easily believe that the highest link of nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair."

If all natural causation is finally Divine Causation, natural science cannot contradict Religion.

The natural and the religious interpretations of the world cannot conflict with one another, if each discovery of a natural cause is recognised as *also* a divine revelation, involving the moral providence that continuously *makes* nature. Those educated in this conception no longer see in the physical antecedent a usurper of the Universal or Divine Power. What ground is there for the assumption, that to find the natural cause of an event is to rescue that event, as it were, from divine agency; and that if the constant physical antecedents of all the changes that occur in nature could be detected, there would then be no room for God? Surely the more successfully scientific inquiry is applied to the sequences presented in experience, the more fully God is revealed; and if we could realise the scientific ideal, by finding the natural causes of all events, we should then be in full possession of the self-revelation given in outward nature of the Perfect Person, of whom the ideal man is the faint symbol and adumbration.

Recognition of natural causation, instead of capricious agency, in the final interpretation of the universe.

Successful search for the actual physical order of the world is claimed as the distinguishing character of modern progress. In the early ages of the world, among imperfectly educated races and individuals, natural appearances, ordinary as well as extraordinary, are referred to the *capricious* personal action of spirits. In this crude imperfectly developed religion, *fear* is therefore the characteristic sentiment. All visible motions are the animated motions of foolish, if not wicked, spirits. Fire, air, earth, and water had each their separate spirits: thunder was emphatically the voice of God. The wayward agency of those incalculable forces obstructed the philosophical conception of universal natural order. Science

now reacts against the capricious agency of spirits. But natural law is by some assumed not only to supersede fetichism and polytheism, but to be inconsistent with the idea of the divine foundation of things, and of continuous divine agency as the operative power at work in all so-called natural agency. The assumption is further made that causation must be only natural, or that natural causation is final. Accordingly, in proportion as natural causes are one by one discovered, God becomes more and more superfluous: natural law takes His place; so that if any room is left for God (which is doubtful), it must be somewhere in the far past, when the world in its orderly process was set agoing. And if scientific inquiry should ever be able to refer *all* events to natural causes, it would, on this hypothesis, have rid the world of religion. Scientific and religious thought of this crude sort necessarily pull in opposite directions. Theism, identified with the irregular action of a capricious spirit, becomes an anachronism, and divine action appears anti-natural. A religious interpretation of the universe looks like a retrograde movement — a relapse into the childish or savage condition of thought, to which the idea of physical causes and natural order is foreign. It seems to mean surrender of the territory conquered by experiment and the scientific understanding, when they have substituted natural causes for the irregular ones of superstition. Under those ideas of what causation means, and of what theism means, the religious interpretation of events seems only covert polytheism, or at least of like intent as a working postulate. Spinoza in the seventeenth century, David Hume and the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, reinforced to-day by a group of speculative naturalists, have warned the world of its intellectual danger, as long as personal agency—assumed to be even in God capricious or irregular agency—is permitted to take the place of persistent order, in what is ambiguously called Nature, which (under a metaphor) is supposed to rule actively by its laws.

Omnipotent spirit.

But are spiritual agency in the Universal Power, and physical order in the effect, necessarily inconsistent? On

ual agency and natural order not necessarily inconsistent.

the contrary, each seems to present one side of a truth common to both. Dependence on persons—agents in the meaning of "agency" that our moral experience makes intelligible — agents who exert rational will — seems to be the only satisfying sort of power of which man is aware. It finds unphilosophic expression in the cruder religions, and in the superstitions that even now confuse Christian thought, which largely fails to comprehend how the Power manifested to man's senses *must* be a Power that produces cosmos, not chaos — so that the effects of Divine agency are universally orderly. But scientific faith has to be purged of its superstitions as well as religious faith. Progressive substitution of natural order for capricious interference need not supersede final agency that may be conceived as personal; and which in the Perfect Person must be the sustaining centre of what is ultimately perfect rational order, however far that order may transcend man's limited means for interpreting it. It is after superstition is exchanged for the theistic faith that treats the natural universe as one form of the manifestation to man of Omnipresent Spirit, that religious thought and scientific thought coincide, instead of contradicting one another. Then God becomes more fully known, through fuller scientific apprehension of divinely maintained sequences. Neither the irregular agency of a capricious Spirit, nor the constant order of visible effects, is man's final conception of existence, which recognises the voice of Conscience inviting us to comprehend the natural evolution as also eternal moral providence.

Summary.

The lesson of this lecture is that religious thought and physically scientific thought about the universe, instead of destroying, really strengthen one another, in their recognition of continuous divine activity, or endless creation under forms of natural order. For the natural order may be interpreted as a revelation of perfectly reasonable Will, with which man is constantly, if often only unconsciously, in intercourse—for good or evil, in pro-

portion as his individual will tends to assimilation with this Will of God. Thunder is no longer the voice of an interfering God, because it is a startling phenomenon: it is a revelation of God, because it is recognised as an event that makes its appearance under divinely natural law in the orderly evolution—

"For if He thunder by law, the thunder is yet His Voice."

LECTURE VI.

OMNIPRESENT DIVINE ADAPTATION.

Retrospective.

We have found in man's moral experience of a power that must be uncaused, because responsible for its effects, relief for the causal craving that is at the root of all scientific inquiry. This relief comes through moral experience, in a practical form; not through physical experience, with its unbeginning and endless succession of natural causes. Deliberate personal volition, for which a person can be justly praised or blamed, must *originate* in a *person* who is morally responsible. This unique example of power may be taken as practically and for us a type of the mysterious Power constantly at work at the heart of things, determining the physical order, upon faith in which daily life and scientific induction proceed. The universe may be treated by man as for him the revelation of moral Power, even if the terms "rational will" and "moral reason" represent the Infinite Power inadequately.

Two rival ultimate postulates.

There are at last two rival ways of regarding the universe. There is the hypothesis of an unbeginning and unending physical succession of changes, metaphorically spoken of as a "chain"—an infinite chain of *non-moral* sequences: there is also the hypothesis, which, without removing the infinite mystery of physical unbeginningness and unendingness, sees in the manifested universe of things and persons, interpreted in science, the constant revelation of active moral Reason. It is true that both these hypotheses leave us at last enveloped in what is

mysterious to sensuous understanding; the mystery into which each retires at last makes an inevitable demand upon moral trust. In accepting either of them we must at last be acting in moral faith, instead of seeing the All with the intellectual vision of omniscience; for in finite mind perfect intellectual vision finds its substitute in final moral trust or faith.

The two postulates compared.

On comparing these two hypotheses, it appears that the final mystery of an infinite physical regress and progress of non-moral causes embraces no satisfying cause at all; but the other hypothesis supplies what meets the causal craving, while it also meets the spiritual constitution of man. On this ground alone, it would appear to be an obligation of reason *finally* to interpret the universe, not atheistically or agnostically, as the wholly physical postulate does, but theistically, according to the spiritual. The first leaves us in physical, because in moral, chaos: it professes physical faith in a universe in the movements of which it can have no moral trust. The second still presupposes physical trust, as proceeded upon in inductive science, but without adopting the negative assumptions of some speculative naturalists; for it finds that physical order and its reliability postulate moral order or moral providence. The atheist—in disclaiming as superfluous perpetually operative moral Power in all natural change, as the guarantee of the customary uniformity which he dogmatically assumes—is virtually saying that evolution in physical nature can have no spiritual meaning; that events must happen without trustworthy reason, because we dare not presuppose divine order. He is left without ground for his faith that they will continue to happen according to the forecasts of science; or that in the future all may not become uninterpretable chaos; or that the changing universe may not suddenly subside into changelessness. The moral key for our intercourse with the outside universe has been wantonly thrown away, under the pressure of an assumption that after all is less comprehensible than the theistic; while, by discarding active moral reason, it leaves us with a universe emptied of what makes it as a natural evolution worthy of scientific trust.

The causal and the teleological conceptions of the universe distinguished.

This theistic interpretation of natural causation, which sees Divine Power pervading physical sequence, can be distinguished from the teleological conception of the universe, implied in the popular argument for God from some striking superhuman contrivances. This sort of proof is popular on account of interesting instances found in nature of adaptation to humanly useful or beautiful ends. In its more philosophical form, it is recognition of adaptation in the cosmical evolution, *in all the details and as a whole*—a natural process that has been continuously leading, on this planet, towards the evolution of Man, with his spiritual endowments. For the universe in which we find ourselves does seem to be a universe which, at least as illustrated by this planet of ours, has been slowly making for the gradual development of *persons*, as its ideal goal.

Observation of natural constructions, a popular proof of Divine Design.

The fact that the natural evolution is found to abound in notable constructions, that have not been contrived by the intending will of man, is probably the consideration that finds most favour, when men are asked, why they believe that the world depends on Omnipotent Goodness, instead of being an incomprehensible accident. Nature is found full of adaptations to, and adaptations in, its living organisms; and, inasmuch as visible adaptation is to ordinary common-sense a sign of designing mind, it seems, if we are in the presence of striking adaptations of means to ends, of which man is not the contriver, that we must be living in the workshop of a divine mechanist. The striking adaptations presented in animal organisms need a cause: neither physical (so-called) causes nor human power are sufficient explanations of constructions so useful, or so beautiful, as many of those which emerge in the course of natural evolution. In presence of this spectacle we are invited, as by Socrates and Cicero and Paley, to refer the constructions in question to Divine Design. The curious natural constitution of the eye, or of the ear, we are told, is so adapted to useful ends that this organ cannot be thought of as an accident of collocation in an irrational flux. Its curious correlation of means and ends was not brought about by a human "eye-maker," while it seems too elaborate to have been

the issue of an unregulated concurrence of atoms. We are obliged, by something in mind, to refer organs like these to a superhuman eye-maker, or ear-maker. Elaborate adaptation cannot be conceived as an uncalculated phenomenon.

Explanation of the wide acceptance of the teleological conception of the universe.

The ready popular recognition of the eye, and other instances of superhuman adaptation, as valid ground for theistic faith, may be partly explained by the way an elaborate and useful machine brings design home strongly to the ordinary mind. In a world full of useful adaptations, one seems more easily than in other ways to find that God is working;—or at least that God must have been once at work, even if, now and during an indefinite past, the maintenance of organic constructions, that at first came suddenly ready-made from the Divine artificer, has been intrusted to what are called "natural" causes. If the adaptations are now natural, they must have been at first supernatural, it is argued. God must, at least at some prehistoric time, have "interfered" to "create" the organ which "nature" now propagates. God seems in this way to be speaking to men out of the far past, even if He has left only "nature" speaking to them at this hour,—speaking to them as one man is said to speak to another—through acts that virtually are a language, because adapted to convey meaning from mind to mind. As a watch brings vividly before one the existence of a watchmaker, so with the eye — so too with the whole human body, and the adaptations which adjust organs to environments, individual minds of men to the universe in which they awake into conscious life. These and like instances of superhuman contrivance are found to quicken human sympathy with the Power that must have been at work before all this could have become what it now naturally continues to be. One is ready, when his attention is emphatically called to abounding examples of useful or beautiful adaptation, to feel as if God were no merely abstract Being, inferred through metaphysical reasoning or speculation; but as if He were a living Person, whose intelligent activity is as distinct as the past intelligent activity of a watchmaker is manifest, in and

through a watch, or as the inventive power of an artist is revealed, in and through the picture of which his design must have been the source. In contemplating the superhuman means and ends in nature, I seem to trace this invisible Power—working consciously—calculating—making use of materials that possess latent capacities for being made useful to men or other animated beings. The chaotic materials, in virtue of inherent powers—tacitly, but without proof, attributed to *them*—are supposed to *admit* of adaptations, and so help to bring about the ends which we now admire and benefit by in the course of nature. Thus, in the examples of well-calculated contrivance which the great machine the physical universe presents, and also in the existence of the great machine itself, an observer seems to find *relics* of a Great Mechanist;—with as much assurance that He *was* intelligent as he has of the intelligence of the contriver to whom he spontaneously refers the adaptations in his watch.

Natural adaptations make God visible in the same way as the constructions of a human artist make the artist visible.

Perhaps it is objected that I cannot *see* this *Divine* Contriver of the adaptations which I thus explain. It may be replied, that neither do I ever really *see* the *human* contrivers of constructions which I attribute to human purpose—at least, if the human contriver means more than the *body* of a human being. But all recognise that the visibly moved human organism is charged with invisible intelligent purposes, so that the visible organism is not merely an unconscious automaton. Still the *conscious intention* of the human artificer is as invisible as the Divine intending purpose is in natural constructions. The private conscious activity of persons is necessarily outside the consciousness of all, except the one person whose living consciousness it is.

Adaptation of the universe to Man.

Another circumstance, less obvious than the mere fact of adaptation, probably contributes to make natural adaptations touch the popular imagination forcibly, awakening the idea of a Divine Designer. For the adaptations seem to converge emphatically upon Man. Withdraw men and sentient animals for ever from the world, and what need for useful or beautiful adaptation? The physical universe evolves in ways many of

which adapt its natural sequences to animal life, but above all to human life. The enormous amount of natural waste that goes on, the numerous natural malformations, above all the appalling human and animal suffering mixed up with the cosmical evolution, may seem to contradict this. Of that afterwards. But these lurid facts do not strip the natural evolution, in its beneficial adaptations, of its necessary relation to beings that are sentient, above all to rational agents. It may be granted that concentration of natural adaptations upon man is only what appears at man's limited point of view; certainly it need not exclude innumerable ends higher than those which make for man. But it is as obvious adaptations to *man at least* that the arrangements attract human beings.

David Hume's acknowledgment of the religious significance of adaptations in Nature.

Something more than can be discovered by the scientific understanding seems to touch man in his contemplation of a universe which, at least in his planetary home, abounds in adaptations to the character of its inhabitants. The divine revelation presented in superhuman constructions and contrivances is recognised by the most sceptical — in certain moods. "The whole chorus of nature," David Hume, in the person of Cleanthes, emphatically acknowledges,—"the whole chorus of nature raises a hymn in praise of its Creator. You alone," he remonstrates with Philo, "or you almost alone, disturb the general harmony. You start abstruse doubts, cavils, objections; you ask me what is the cause of this supposed intelligent designing Cause? I answer that I know not, I care not; that concerns not me. *I have found a Deity;* and here I *choose* to stop my inquiry into causes. Let those go farther who are wiser and more enterprising." In these words, nevertheless, Hume puts only an arbitrary arrest upon regressive causal questioning —in lack of the moral arrest that we have found tacitly presupposed in the fundamental moral postulate of all human experience. This reason for arrest was outside the range of his vision and philosophy, finally determined as that was by a mechanical conception of "natural causes" —causes that, unlike volitions, need to be themselves caused by what is external to themselves. Physical observation,

rather than moral implicates or spiritual insight, is the basis of Hume's reasoning, in his 'History of Religion,'—when he concludes that "the whole frame of nature bespeaks an intelligent Author," and that "no rational inquirer can, after serious reflection, suspend his belief for a moment with regard to the primary principles of genuine theism and religion." Moreover, this "genuine theism," on Hume's premisses, is only the attenuated theism which infers, from *some* observed cosmical adaptations, the past operation of "an intelligent cause" of those adaptations—while left in doubt about omnipotent and omnipresent goodness. Granting the relevancy of the human analogy, he might say, an intelligence other than human seems to have been—at some past time—at work in Nature. But as to the good or bad character of this intelligent antecedent, or the extent of his power, the empirical data leave him unable to determine anything: perfect reason and perfect goodness would be in excess of the only premisses which his philosophy allowed him to use. And thus his so-called "god" is only one intelligent, but perhaps deceiving or even malignant, agent, added to the agents we are accustomed to find in our experience of human contrivers. He offers us a god that still needs God.

Proof of divine adaptation that is based only on striking adaptations, inadequate.

The argument for God that is grounded on certain striking adaptations—long favoured in popular theology, roughly handled by Spinoza, criticised by Kant, discredited by some speculative naturalists of this generation — is in danger of losing the value that really belongs to it, as a rational auxiliary to the theistic interpretation which we are led to put upon the universe by the inevitable moral implicates of human experience. Presuppose perfect moral reason or goodness, as what is always and everywhere active at the heart of existence; *then*, with this inevitable metaphysical foundation of human experience, signal instances of adaptation to man that present themselves bring vividly home the conception of Divine intending mind at the root of all; notwithstanding the mixture of malconstruction, misery,

and sin in which this planet abounds. But to *infer* the omnipresence of perfect wisdom, and merciful love, *solely* from striking specimens of fitness that occur in our observation of the external world, is to beg a conclusion unduly assumed — not one logically gathered. The divine conclusion is *infinitely* in excess of the finite premisses: the largest collection of superhuman constructions can yield only a more or less probable *finite* inference: the finite can never be *logically* transformed into the infinite. The observed data perhaps suggest *some* intelligent contriver of the observed contrivances, analogous to the mind supposed in the human contriver of a machine, but wanting in the unique infinity or absoluteness that is Divine.

Other defects in the supposed deduction of the Divine Designer, from occasional striking instances of contrivance in nature, suggest themselves, if the observed facts are presented to prove the infinite conclusion, and not merely to awaken the infinite postulate—or otherwise to awaken our latent faith and hope in God, as the primary necessity in any intercourse with the universe. How, one may ask, can the analogy of a human artist and his work apply at all to the divine artist, whose power is supposed to be boundless, and who must therefore be the Agent responsible for the materials which, in the relation of Designer, he is alleged to have adapted, with more or less difficulty, to his ends? Why should adaptation of *resisting material* be part of the work of the Power, on which the material, with all its qualities or modes of behaviour, must, on the divine interpretation, finally depend? This looks like supposing God to cause a difficulty, only in order that He may afterwards show His skill and strength in its removal.

The argument seems to make God author of a difficulty, in order that He may show His skill in overcoming it.

Again. The introduction of a Divine Designer has been reclaimed against, as "interference" with the province which science must keep secure for natural evolution only — which, because natural, is dogmatically assumed to be undivine. Natural uncalculating evolution must receive, we are told, all the glory of the useful and beautiful contrivances by which the inorganic world and its

And to contradict universality of rational order.

organisms contribute to the wants of living beings. Visible sequences in their customary evolution, it is asserted, are all we have to do with, and it is worse than superfluous to invest *them* with purpose. Even although some natural effects involve adaptations which, if their antecedent *could* have been a human hand, we might refer to the hand as their cause, nevertheless experience of natural evolution shows that, in the absence of the human hand, physical causes spontaneously, under natural law, transform themselves by slow degrees into those useful and beautiful mechanisms which, in their former ignorance, men referred to the "interference" of God. Our own experience of what nature—without capricious and unscientific divine interference—*does* gradually transform itself into, demonstrates that supernatural interposition is superfluous. Natural evolution is found, in fact, to issue in what we call contrivance; but the contrivances are seen to be issues of wholly natural antecedent conditions, which need no conscious design or predestination. To assume arbitrarily "the intervention of a designing force" is to withdraw attention from what alone is of practical importance in man's intercourse with what is around him—to wit, visible causes, which men are able in some degree to adapt as means to desirable ends. Visible causes are the only causes on which our organic pleasures and pains depend. Man, it is alleged, has nothing to do with a Universal Power, about which natural science can say nothing, because it is outside sensuous experience.

Natural Causation may express Divine Design.

A recent criticism of Lord Salisbury's British Association address illustrates this. It was made by Dr Weismann, the eminent naturalist. It contains the following remarkable sentence: — "The scientific man may not assume the existence of a designing force, as Lord Salisbury suggests; for by so doing he would surrender the presupposition of his research—the comprehensibility of nature." Now, by the "comprehensibility of nature," I suppose Dr Weismann means, the "presupposition" that changes in nature must be in all cases the issue or metamorphosis of ascertainable natural causes, whatever else they may be, or may imply; so that the particular

sorts of *natural* causes on which the different kinds of physical facts and events depend, and not the origin of the Whole, is all that physical science has to do with. The *physical comprehensibility of nature* is, in short, the postulate and motive of *natural science;* in obedience to which it persists in inquiring only for the *visible and tangible* conditions of changes. But that this "comprehensibility of nature," so understood, should bar out the religious conception of nature as *also* divine adaptation of means to ends—useful or beautiful ends—looks like saying that the world must be finally undivine, in order that it may be scientifically comprehended. That Active Reason, as "designing force," should "necessarily contradict," or "interfere with," the scientific presupposition of fixed natural order, is itself a prejudice, the groundlessness of which I have already suggested. The scientific "comprehensibility" of nature, instead of being inconsistent with the omnipresence of divine adaptation, is really only one way of expressing it as a practical fact. To show that an event is the new form of some physical antecedent is not, properly speaking, to show its origin: it only makes us ask further, What invests its antecedent with this natural "power"? Does not this question at last throw us back upon *intending will*, or *moral agency*, as the *only originating power* that man encounters, involved as he finds it in his own moral experience? May not the sort of causation for which a finite personal agent is responsible be taken as, for man, sufficiently typical of the Universal Power; and may not that Power be supposed able to act even without the visible conditions which alone concern the physical inquirer? If all natural causation may at last be reasonably *this*, then discovery of a natural cause—which is thus only the divinely constituted sign of an approaching event—is no disproof of the event being part of the cosmical revelation of divine intending Will. This thought indeed seems to be dimly present to Dr Weismann himself, when he adds that "there is nothing to prevent our conceiving (if conception be the right word to use in such a context) of a Creator as lying behind or within the forces of Nature, and being their ultimate

cause." Yet throughout his remarks, the ambiguous word "force," in its unanalysed physical application, obscures his meaning; which had already been confused by the dogma that "divine design" is necessarily "interference" with order in nature; or an "intervention to supplement the forces of Nature just where they break down." It cannot be "interference" or "superfluous intervention," if intending Will is the *only* originating cause—constant sequence being the divinely ordered, and therefore physically interpretable, effect.

Adaptations may only gradually evolve, according to natural law, and yet be manifestations of continuous divine agency.

Further. Adaptations seem in fact to be slowly evolved, according to natural laws, in a progress that often looks likes regress; but notwithstanding this they may be a natural revelation of God. If morally intending power is the *only* power to which man can refer change; and if constant activity of this power is an implicate of faith in natural order, it follows that *growth* or *evolution*, not *off-hand production*, is the true analogy to the manifestation of God that is presented in persistent creation by evolution. Providential evolution — including occasional crises of natural disintegration — in an essentially supernatural process, issuing from an unbeginning past, with its outcome in an unending future,—*this* rather than sudden divine interference with the divine continuity of events, becomes the theistic conception of universal contrivance in nature, under the dynamical conception of the physical universe. Creation becomes Universal Providence, or divinely adapted nature. Evolution or metamorphosis is both natural and divine,—the visible growth as it were of the universal organism, in which human organisms, naturally yet supernaturally, live and move and have their being. A universe charged throughout, in each and all of its parts, with natural adaptation may then be read as the expression of living and acting Reason, revealed throughout the Whole. The striking examples illustrate, for popular use, pervading purpose in the physical drama; they come home to the ordinary mind in the way characteristic actions and habits of a man strikingly reveal his inner life.

The idea of the physical universe as not finished product

but continuous natural process—without limits—in analogy so far with the brief continuous life of a plant or an animal—is hinted at by the sceptical Philo in Hume's 'Dialogues' as a more reasonable final conception of Nature than that which likens it to a machine constructed by a mechanist at a given time. Yet Philo makes the tacit assumption that if cosmical adaptations are in fact successive outcomes of natural order—under a law of "natural selection," let us suppose—they cannot *need* omnipresent intending mind to direct them. The "course of nature"—whatever that means—is credited with the collocations: they are simply a part of the customary behaviour of Nature; as if Nature's conduct might ultimately be other than divine or morally trustworthy conduct. Take the following in one of the utterances of Philo:—"There are other parts of the universe besides the machines of human invention, which bear a greater resemblance than this to the fabric of the world, and which therefore afford a better conjecture concerning the universal origin of this system. These parts are animals and vegetables. The world plainly resembles an animal or a vegetable more than it does a watch or a knitting-loom. Its cause, therefore, it is more probable, resembles the cause of the former than the latter. The cause of the former is generation or vegetation. The cause therefore of the world we may infer to be something similar or analogous to generation or vegetation. . . . In like manner as a tree sheds its seed into the neighbouring fields, and produces other trees, so the great vegetable, the world, *naturally* produces within itself certain seeds, which, being scattered into the surrounding chaos, vegetate into new worlds. Or if, for the sake of variety (for I see no other advantage), we should suppose the universe to be an animal: a comet is, as it were, the egg of this animal. An existing tree bestows order and organisation on the tree which springs from it—without itself knowing the order; an animal, in the same manner, on its offspring—without foreseeing what is done; and instances of this kind are even more frequent in the world than those of order which arise from conscious reason and contrivance. To say that all this order or ad-

Is the universe, with its universal adaptations, a natural growth; and if so, can it also be morally ordered and conceived?

aptation in animals and vegetables proceeds ultimately from design is begging the question; nor can that great point be ascertained otherwise than by proving *a priori* both that order is from its nature inseparably connected with thought, and that it can never of itself, or from original unknown principles, belong to matter." Now if visible natural sequence *must* be taken, as Philo takes it, for our last word about the universe, probably the natural processes of vegetation and of the birth of animals may give a better final conception of the Whole than any others suggested by those natural processes which come within man's experience. But if all natural causes must themselves be effects; if our interpretation of such effects, as cases of natural laws, itself depends upon moral reason for the faith which makes it possible, and enables us with confidence to put even physical interpretations upon changes; if, moreover, there is nothing in the physical interpretability of events that is inconsistent with a co-ordinate theistic interpretation of them; and if this deeper interpretation of their natural modes of behaviour, adaptations, or constructions, is required to meet man's genuine spiritual needs — if all this be so, why should natural causation, when some of its elaborate constructions are ascertained by inquiry, be regarded as so far necessarily empty of God? Why must I assume that each fresh discovery of what is called a natural contrivance is a discovery that relieves the natural effect of connection with Omnipotent Goodness?

Eternal evolution of the universe, taken sceptically, paralyses faith in divine design.

It is the overwhelming idea of the infinity of the universe, when it arises in a physically scientific habit of thought, that seems to oppress Philo and those who like him think only physically, with what, if they think things out, becomes a despairing sense of the total uninterpretability of experience, — its uninterpretability even up to the extent to which physical observers profess to read it into natural science. Philo takes hold of the Infinite by its agnostic handle; and so, instead of its mystery quickening reverential faith, the infinity seems to disintegrate experience. The incomprehensibility of physical experience, with its final negations in

the Boundlessness and Endlessness into which the natural sequences refund themselves, are allowed to paralyse religious faith in the supremacy of Omnipotent Goodness. With the loss of the primary moral postulate of experience, the mysteries of the infinite in quantity—in space, in duration, and in physical causality — dissolve the divine analogy between cosmical adaptation and the adaptations which we are accustomed to refer to human contrivers. But this disintegrative sense of infinity, if the sceptic were consistent, would not cease to operate when he contemplates the contrivances of men. The persons who surround us, notwithstanding the signs of design presented in *their* organic history, may also, like the supposed universe, be only automatons: no man can make part of his own consciousness the invisible purpose which he attributes to a visible companion. The dark shadow of infinite mystery not only destroys the analogy so far as to forbid the *theistic* interpretation of our curiously adapted world; it not less forbids reference of the visible adaptation in a watch to the conscious design of a human watchmaker. More than this, it forbids all interpretation of all natural phenomena; because it implies that the universe, on account of its infinity, is too unique for us to make *any* affirmations about *any* of its events. It has lost its divine synthetic principle, and become a succession of meaningless appearances.

Design revealed through a material medium.

Conscious design in another person is invisible and inferred. I see the material constructions, and I see the movements in a human organism that naturally lead to the product; but I cannot see or feel the mental activity that I suppose in their cause, and which, in the case of living human organisms, I refer to a conscious agency that is human, and essentially like my own. We are more at a loss how to represent to ourselves the invisible processes experienced by other animals on this planet, in *their* seeming adaptations of means to ends and works of art—bees in their mathematically regulated constructions, ants in their organised commonwealth, or dogs in an intelligent kindness that often seems to rival that of man. Yet when I find in them too signs of calculation

resembling those which give expression to states of conscious life in myself, something in me makes me regard this as significant of a living intelligence other than my own. In all cases orderly adaptation of means to ends—whether presented in human organisms and their movements, in the organisms and movements of animals, or in the universal evolution—obliges men to treat the manifestations of adaptation as a revelation of design. When overt actions which involve skill are performed through our organs, as they often are, without *our own* conscious agency, we are obliged to refer them to *another* intending intelligence. Is not Nature the providential working of Omnipresent Mind?

We may recognise adaptation without being able to comprehend fully the adapting Power.

The presence of adaptation in the passive evolutions of nature may be affirmed, although we are unable to enter in imaginative thought into the conscious life of the productive Power. Although the universe, as related to us, manifests sufficiently comprehensible examples of means adapted to human comfort, it would be presumptuous to infer from this that the Intelligence manifested in the production of those natural adaptations must calculate as men do. We cannot enter in imaginative thought even into the mental state of those beings we call "inferior" animals, who are so great a mystery to us: we are infinitely less able in the case of the Universal Designer. Yet man sees in natural adaptations what he may with moral confidence proceed upon, as signs of what *he* can treat only as consciously calculating mind;—still without power to realise adequately what, for want of more expressive language, he calls "Infinite Mind."

Natural law itself implies adaptation of nature to interpreting intelligence.

I have so far distinguished adaptation in nature from order in nature. Yet, looked at more deeply, not only do faith in omnipresent physical law, and faith in omnipresent adaptation, rise out of the constitution of man in the universe, but the two faiths appear to coincide at last. For natural uniformity is adaptation of the world to the service of man. If we could suppose ourselves living in a physical chaos, instead of living in what faith accepts as a physical cosmos; and if in this supposed chaos we could

be endowed with our present moral and religious constitution—we should still, it would seem, be obliged to suppose that the apparent chaos must have its *final* outcome in the cosmos of a reasonable world. But in those circumstances, besides greatly increased strain upon our faith in perfect goodness at the heart of the chaos, we should lose the educational and other advantages now afforded in a world so adapted to us that we gradually learn how to regulate our conduct in it, especially as ministers in a social system.

The purpose of Matter and physical adaptation, in relation to man.

The divine constitution of physical order, with its natural evolution in universal adaptations, may seem a roundabout method for accomplishing what Infinite Power might be supposed to provide, without matter, immediately by miracle. What is the purpose of an organism so curiously constructed as the eye, one may ask, if God could make human spirits able to experience the conscious state called "seeing" without an eye; or what need for the complex structure of our bodies, if we could have the whole percipient and conscious life we pass through between birth and death as unbodied spirits? If those elaborate constructions are not needed to serve the conscious life with which they are found connected, *how are they adaptations?* This raises questions about Matter and its relation to Spirit, on which I have already touched.

Summary.

The lesson of this lecture is, that divine design is a conception involved in natural orderly evolution, and that whether Nature is contemplated as a whole, or in each of its organisms and each of its events. Divine adaptation pervading the whole involves design in every event in the history of each individual;—even as gravitation is illustrated in the fall of the most insignificant grain of sand. The universality of adaptation — the idea of intending moral providence in all change—seems as reasonable as the universality of gravitation, or of evolution within their narrower spheres. Nothing is too great or too little for natural law: nothing is too great or too little for providential purpose. Universal Providence is by implication special, as universal gravitation is special: the very idea of natural law is essentially constructive and teleological.

LECTURE VII.

PHILOSOPHICAL OR THEOLOGICAL OMNISCIENCE.

The Science of Religion has collected facts which suggest that critical analysis will discover reason in theistic faith.

I HAVE been trying to show that those are proceeding unreasonably, and therefore unphilosophically, who treat theistic faith, or the disposition to put a finally ethical and religious interpretation upon the universe, as persons who are indulging what is only ignorant sentiment—characteristic of some men, and some races of men, at certain stages in the evolution of mankind—sentiment which may try to take the form of thought, but which to advanced thought is transitory fancy, soon to become an anachronism, if it is not already this among the educated. The historic fact of the permanence, in many forms, of the disposition to worship the Universal Power, or invisible background of human life, with the immense influence the religious conception has in the development of man, might suggest that theistic faith and hope in the Power universally at work must be resolvable into reason, if it is not even Universal Reason itself in its most real manifestation. The modern Science of Religion has accumulated evidence that religion is the potent factor in history; although the human disposition to interpret experience in the light of supernatural power is found to degrade the interpreter, when a faith essentially ethical presents itself as non-moral, or as superstition. But, even in superstition, one can trace an ineradicable dissatisfaction with what is merely finite, and sometimes a sense of dutiful conformity to ennobling ideals. And in all this theism appears in germ. Ancestor worship, or priestcraft, or dread of the unknown,

may have been occasions of its awakening; the final issue of the rude awakening may carry within it its own rational justification, when tested by the *homo mensura* standard, or by the *divina mensura* humanised. Individuals do not themselves see, in many cases, what their disposition to read the world religiously means, when unfolded philosophically; so they fail to recognise in religious faith the most rational conception of the changing universe that man can finally form. Those too in whom religious emotion is strong, are not on that account intellectually awake to its connection with the scientific interpretation of the world.

The rationale of theistic faith so far found in the causal and teleological justifications of its validity.

The last three lectures were meant to show that in proceeding upon the religious conception of the universe we are not only not contradicting physical science, but are really explaining and sustaining the physically scientific interpretation of the world. For nothing that I find in reason forbids us to think of the course of nature as finally the outcome of perfect reasonable Will —as, in short, one of the modes of the self-revelation of God? Natural laws are not disparaged when they are not only believed in, on the faith of experiments, but also accepted at last, in moral or religious faith. Instead of banishing God, they are, so far as they go, articulate revelation of active moral Reason, or Will that man's natural environment should be a calculable physical order, and not an incalculable procession of chaotic events. When nature is seen in God, every fresh discovery of its scientific meaning is recognised as also an advance in theology. The natural evolution of phenomena becomes in our thought God's natural, and therefore reasonable, mode of acting; referred to God because there is no evidence in human experience of any other originating Power than intending will, or moral agency. This is what one finds at the root of so-called causal or cosmological proof of God. It is an argument for faith in the religious meaning of natural order or law. At first the idea of cause expresses only a deep-rooted human sense of dissatisfaction with chance change, and implied demand for that by which this dissatisfaction

—provisionally relieved by the natural causes of science —may be finally and reasonably put to rest. It seems to be true philosophy that man should accept the only *resting* sort of cause that experience offers—that exemplified in his idea of his own moral responsibility. Its adoption transforms the otherwise wholly physical and unsatisfying universe into what, when thus more deeply conceived and more considerately lived in, is found to be universal moral order, or moral providence.

The omnipresence of Design in Nature.

But the impotence of physical phenomena, abstracted from the spiritual activity which they thus manifest, is not the only ground in reason that sustains theistic faith in the Universal Power. A perception of the powerlessness of outward things *per se*, makes the percipient ready to acknowledge Omnipotent Goodness. *Mens agitat molem.* Yet this is not all that the changing world is apt to awaken. There are more precise signs of Mind continually operative in Nature. We find natural means obviously adapted to issue gradually in useful or beautiful ends: the organised matter of the world abounds in them. The calculating thought latent in Nature becomes more apparent with each advance of natural science; and especially since the modern idea of organic evolution has formulated scientific interpretation. For what, at our human point of view, is called Divine Design, is recognisable, not only in striking instances of natural adaptation, like those on which Paley dwells, but in the very notion of progressive orderly evolution. Isolated examples, singled out by old-fashioned theologians, as proofs of the interference of a calculating and contriving Power, are now scientifically explained as gradual processes, in terms of natural law. The human body and its organs may be accounted for, we find, by natural causes—causes long and slowly operative. And the whole physical world may turn out, in the progress of physical science, to consist of slowly formed instances of natural construction—useful or beautiful adaptations of means to human and other ends,—but all arising as sequences in the process of natural causation. The visible machine of Nature seems to be continually shedding constructions and adap-

tations, evolved according to what is called "natural selection," or in other natural modes of behaviour. But the ambiguous Power called Nature is only metaphorically "doing" this, or doing anything. Its phenomena present no proof of their originating agency; we find in man only power that must be hyperphysical, because man is able to be moral or immoral. The great natural machine is charged with divine activity, and all its evolutions admit of a teleological as well as a physical interpretation. Natural causes explain, sufficiently for sense and scientific understanding, the visible organisation of man, as well as his special organs, such as the eye or the ear. But this physically scientific explanation is always only *provisional* explanation. The world may also be conceived as the design of what, at the human point of view, may be called perfect intending Will; so that constant rational providence may, at the end, be credited with the adaptations that are gradually elaborating in every particular of the natural outcome. On the supposition that scientific inquiry verifies the law of universal natural evolution, science is only disclosing natural adaptations that are in process of slow continuous formation—the law of evolutionary procedure being the scientific expression of how the continuous creation proceeds. The Power that keeps the whole in motion is then thought of as Power that is eternally making for useful and beautiful relations of means to ends, in the virtually living organism that is commonly called Nature;—and in issues of gradually increasing value, measured by the satisfaction which they afford to man, who is himself the highest of the providential outcomes on this planet. Nature, thus contemplated, becomes in our view charged with Purpose, and a revelation of the Divine, to which awakened divinity, latent in man, responds in intellectual and moral sympathy. This is just to say that God is the real cause in all natural causes—those making either for the integration or for the disintegration of the present world. In either way—integrative or disintegrative—nature continuously reveals God.

The final physical

It is only when the final mystery of the physical infinity of Nature is taken wantonly by its atheistic handle, that

mystery need not paralyse power of interpreting what does enter into our experience.

our want of physical omniscience is produced as reason for refusing to read experience theistically. For the world would be scientifically uninterpretable, if man were obliged to turn away from all attempts to explain even its physical laws, until he had relieved himself of the final *physical* mystery by rising into Omniscience. I cannot move locally from where I stand, if I am bound, before I do so, to have a *perfect* knowledge of the universe, and to be in this way independent of final faith-venture. And the faith that the orderly evolution of nature is a history of Purpose, may be confirmed by observation of natural means in remarkable relations to animal ends.

Signal natural adaptations and universal natural design.

When particular natural constructions, like the eye in man, or wings in a bird, are appealed to as signs that intelligent agency must have been at work in overcoming the resistance of intractable material, by adroit combination and collocation—like a human artificer laboriously making a machine—the idea of Divine Design presents two difficulties. In the first place, it represents natural law, or qualities of "matter," as in conflict with the Designer. This is so, no doubt, when the artist is a man. But if God is vaguely credited with the natural laws and qualities themselves, as imposed by Him upon Matter in some prehistoric period in the illimitable Past, according to the crude idea of "creation," this looks like God making a difficulty at first, for the pleasure of overcoming it afterwards. In the second place, to ground faith in *divine* design, on visible adaptations in particular instances, supposed to be independent of physical law, runs the risk of having *such* supernaturalness discovered to be after all an issue of a natural process; and with this the divine design disappears—if we must assume that when a construction is proved to be natural, it must *therefore not* be due to the Divine Power. But it is otherwise when something, not proved to be unreasonable, in the conscious constitution of man, *makes us* see in all natural processes and issues really divine processes and issues; so that whenever useful or beautiful adaptations of means to ends, in organic structures or otherwise, are naturally evolved, *this evolution, however slow and gradual*, is rightly

interpreted by man as an issue of the constant action of omnipresent Deity. External nature throughout its natural evolution—out of an original fire-mist, if you please, or whatever else can be proved scientifically to have been its preceding form—is then one phase of Divine revelation —to us revelation of superhuman *design*—whatever more it may be, under relations higher than the human.

Defects in the causal, and in the teleological "arguments," for the theistic interpretation of the universe.

In last two lectures I invited your attention to what is suggested by the ever-changing phenomena presented in the physical universe, in illustration of presupposed confidence in the perfect reasonableness and goodness of the Power at work at the heart of the Whole. There is inadequacy in these causal and teleological considerations, taken by themselves, although they are reasonable auxiliaries to theistic faith. But when put into the form of arguments, the infinite conclusion is seen to be fallaciously begged in the argument. For one thing, the final appeal in both is made to finite human experience, while the conclusion is concerned with the Universal Power. This, some accordingly assume, can be legitimate only if Divine Consciousness somehow enters into man, and elevates his individual understanding into Universal Reason. How can the rationality at the heart of the universe be found in my individual intelligence? How can each person's private intelligence—so much his own as that no other person can be conscious of it—how can this isolated intelligence be the centre of a Universal Knowledge? I and all other persons might never have existed, and yet the rationality of the universe would remain; at least if "knowledge" is real, and the physical universe trustworthy and interpretable? If theism is valid, must not an element be wanting, in this human or relative interpretation of natural causation, and teleological conception of the universe?

Is not the religious conception an absolute principle of pure reason?

What has been called "ontological proof" of the inseparability of Thought and Reality is sometimes brought forward as an absolute foundation. The idea of unconditional need for Eternal Mind, the abstract impossibility

of reality in the absence of thought, the contradiction implied in the supposition of the universe existing without Mind, is a principle which has taken different forms in theological and philosophical speculation. Ought it to be accepted as the basis of theism? Is Infinite Mind the rationally necessary presupposition of any possible reality? From Plato to Hegel, the abstract necessity for Universal Reason is a principle that has in different forms pervaded philosophy. Through this necessity, the individual thinker essayed to secure for himself a more commanding position than the individual consciousness of a human mind seemed to supply. It is argued that one's intellectual hold of the universe cannot be dependent on one's own, lately born, isolated self. For a human being to attain intellectual possession of reality, he must somehow become involved in a higher Reason than his individual reason: he finds himself more than an orphan spirit or spiritual atom: he must therefore be somehow *identified* with the Universal Reason. So regarded, my true self is found, in proportion as it unfolds, to be Universal Consciousness: what is called reason in me finds justification in the discovery that Reason finally is not mine individually, but mine in so far as God lives in me. My self is truly and infinitely realised in God; and the individual, orphan, isolated self is renounced, the more the individual man becomes divine. The essential divinity of what is truly real is discovered when we learn to rise above the physical sciences, and enter into the central Philosophy of Being, which is theology under another name — theology that deserves the proud title of science of sciences.

Various phases of this ontologically necessary theism.

A position akin to this is, I think, taken in the chief forms of ontological proof, or constructive necessity for God. I have described it perhaps more according to the manner in which it appears in the idealistic thought of this generation than in its earlier forms. One recognises it, however, in the Idealism of Plato, where things presented to sense dimly symbolise the full rational reality towards which individual man approximates, as he rises from contingent appearances, and fluctuating

opinions, and enters into the intellectual necessities of Universal Reason. That Thought which transcends each private consciousness, and can be entered into only through mystical ecstasy, alone contains the secret of the universe, was the supreme lesson of Plotinus in later and more adventurous Platonism. Recognition of an abstract necessity for Divine or Perfect Being, as involved in the very idea of perfection, pervades the once celebrated theistic reasonings of St Augustine, St Anselm, and Descartes. Perfection in idea, it was argued, must include existence; for an idea cannot be perfect unless conceived to be real, not mere illusion. So the Divine Reality is involved in the very idea of absolute perfection that is latent in us all: thought necessarily underlies existence: universal thought must underlie universal reality: real existence needs thought to realise it. These are varied expressions of a principle which appears at the bottom of this abstract theism. Expressed in crude form, this looks like the childish fallacy, that because I fancy that a thing or a person exists, the thing or person must therefore really exist. But to say that the existing reality implies eternal reason is very different from saying that men's contingent fancies about finite things must all be realities; or from justifying Kant's caricature of this theistic proof, as if it were equivalent to saying, "Because I imagine I have money in my purse, it must be true that I have it." That there is an intellectual necessity for God involved in our ideas of space and immensity, duration and eternity, is another form of ontological argument for theism: it appears in Samuel Clarke's once famous demonstration that God exists. And the religious philosophy of St Anselm and Descartes is a sort of anticipation of the "*esse* is *percipi*," of Berkeley; itself dimly anticipated, long before St Anselm, in the *τὸ αὐτὸ νοεῖν τε καὶ εἶναι*, attributed to Parmenides. That Universal Mind or the Infinite is, by necessity, the *prius* of individual things and persons, and presupposed in their existence, is the constant refrain in Berkeley's 'Siris,' in which the inevitable demand for Divine Reason, as the finally uniting principle, is reiterated at different points

of view. "Comprehending God and the creatures in one general notion, we may truly say," according to Berkeley, "that all things together make one Universe, or *τὸ πᾶν*." But if we should say "all things make one God," this, he thinks, would be an erroneous notion of God; nevertheless it would not amount to Atheism, so long as Mind or Intellect was admitted to be the Universal Power. It is nevertheless, he thinks, more respectful, and consequently the truer notion of God, to suppose Him neither made up of parts, nor to be Himself a part of any Whole whatever. The intellectual need for recognising that the universe must be constituted in Universal Reason is the chief lesson of Berkeley's 'Siris'—a book of pregnant aphorisms, and a step in development of the conception that divine synthesis is the necessary foundation of all that is real.

Ontological necessity for Deity as in Leibniz and since Kant.

The recognition by Leibniz of universal ideas, innate in the universe, and in the human mind in its pre-established harmony with the universe, contains a germ of *a priori* theism. Kant's philosophical revolution made him the Copernicus of philosophy and theology, in accepting conditioned human thought as, for man, the central and regulative principle of *his* universe—instead of supposing thought and its implicates to be finally explicable by visible causes, as materialistic naturalism dogmatically does. Kant opened the way to the theology or philosophy of Hegel. If human experience of the universe is real experience, it must be *intelligible* experience: its intelligibility is its justification. Knowledge, even hopeful desire to know, presupposes that what is sought in experience must respond to intelligence. The postulate that we are really living in a knowable world, already more or less interpreted by man, is an element in the rationale of theistic faith: as we have seen, it adapts itself to theism. External nature is instinctively treated by us all in the way a book is treated by its intelligent reader. We *expect* to find meaning in our experience: this expectant trust supposes that experienced nature *is* reasonable. But the Reason that is implied in intelligible experience, making it interpretable, is not merely my individual or private thinking; nor can it be

only the private thinking of any individual person: it must be Universal Reason. The universe must be a network of rational relations, in virtue of which it is capable of being reduced to absolute science. Those intelligible relations are the Divine Thought that is involved in it—latent at first, as far as each man is concerned, but which men are bringing forth in the form of science, more and more. Scientific advance, so far as it goes, is their increasing *participation* in the Universal Reason: in proportion to his success as an interpreter of nature, man is identifying himself more with the Reason, which scientific and philosophic experience finds presupposed at the centre of the Whole. I begin to participate in the divine thought, when, by expectant calculation, founded on experience, I bring my individual thinking out of idle fancy, and into line with the thought latent in nature; thus substituting reasonable "interpretation" of nature for the capricious individual "anticipation" of nature, which Bacon so emphatically condemns. And so in all science and philosophy one seems to be "identifying" himself with God, or with divine thought latent in experience, which expresses itself through him in proportion as his thoughts about things become more divine, in other words, as science advances. So too in reading a book intelligently and sympathetically; the reader re-thinks the thought of the author, participating in his intellectual life: the reader becomes one with the author; the author enters into and assimilates the reader. It is thus with man and God.

Abstract Thought and living Mind.

Again. Thought or Reason, whether in this way present in the human microcosm, or omnipresent in the Macrocosm, must be referred, at least by man, to something that is living and conscious. Man is instinctively obliged to *personify* the Universal Intelligence. The relations which an interpretable universe involves, oblige us to suppose that our universe is united in living intelligence. Universal Thought must mean Universal Consciousness. So that scientific intercourse with the phenomena presented to us in our fragmentary human experience is taken as the beginning of philosophic inter-

course with the Universal Consciousness; or, if another mode of expression be preferred, the beginning of the revelation in and to us of the Universal Consciousness. It is approach on our part, and self-revelation on God's part, which becomes more full and articulate with human progress in divine philosophy.

Hegelian ontological Theism.

Following this line of argument or speculation, we find ourselves becoming involved at last in something not unlike the dialectical procedure of Hegel. For his philosophy is finally and throughout theology — perhaps the most comprehensive and elaborate theology that modern thinking has produced; and which, indirectly more than by direct adoption, has been giving form to the religious thought of this age. Its sympathetic introduction to the English-speaking world is largely due to an eminent countryman, a former Gifford Lecturer. Dr Hutchison Stirling's 'Secret of Hegel,' published in 1865, marks an epoch in our insular philosophy, with corresponding enlargement in subsequent religious thought. Its appearance was almost contemporaneous with that of another memorable book, representative of the opposite pole of philosophy, yet not without affinity in its comprehensiveness to Hegelian theological thought — I mean the 'First Principles,' followed by a 'Synthetic Philosophy,'—which Mr Herbert Spencer has contributed to the intellectual life of his generation. Indeed his philosophy of the universe is a sort of inverted Hegelianism—resting on an empirical base, and constructed by generalisation, not by necessities of rational dialectic. Its apotheosis is the for ever Unknowable Power, at the extreme opposite to the potential if not actual Omniscience professed by Hegel.

The Theological Philosophy of Hegel.

Hegelian dialectic is virtually Hegelian theology. It is a Philosophical Theism which is bound to supersede Faith by a perfect theological Science. Indeed Hegel's interest in the final problem seems to be religious and Christian as much as intellectual. As with Aristotle, and still more with Aquinas, theolgy is with him the consummation of philosophical speculation, if not exactly in Bacon's sense, "the Sabbath and port of all man's labours and peregrinations."

Hegelian dialectic might be described as an exhaustive intellectual evolution of what is put in a less articulate way in the cosmological argument founded on the need for cause. There one finds rest in the agency of God, or, in the language of this class of thinkers, in the Universal Consciousness. The Hegelian progressive and ascending synthesis is a process which is adopted to show articulately the inadequacy of each lower and therefore more abstract principle of thought. It expresses the need for ascending regressively from the extreme inadequacy of Abstract Being to the infinite fulness of the concrete Divine Reality—making manifest that the universe in its concreteness necessarily presupposes infinite wealth in its Divine ground. This dialectical evolution is not old-fashioned deduction, unfolded in the way conclusions in geometry are drawn out of axioms and definitions in which they are logically involved; nor is it induction from facts, in the way natural causes are generalised in physical science. It is an intellectual construction of what is presupposed in the lower and more abstract principles of thought, purged of the inadequacy and error that pertains to them when they are taken as ultimate. Thus abstract Being must be less adequate to express the infinite wealth of Divine Being than the higher category of change or Becoming: this, in turn, is less adequate than Being that is determinate; and so on, till God in His fulness is reached in the infinite thought — to be realised more and more fully in the progressive conscious intelligence of mankind. This regressive dialectical ascent promises, at each stage of advance, a fuller conception of God, till at last God is found by the philosopher in the form of rationally articulated Universal Consciousness, shared unconsciously by things and consciously by persons. Each step on the ascent, on account of its still unsatisfying abstractness, craves a richer or more concrete thought; without this further development, the judgment is left sceptical between affirmation and negation. The consequent intellectual unrest is the movement which carries the individual mind upward, until it finds complete satisfaction in the universal rational

Dialectical Evolution.

articulation or God. Dialectical development of the divine thought, in its hierarchical gradation, is the Hegelian unfolding of philosophical theism. The individual thinker, potentially identical with God, through the unconscious presence of the philosophically articulated reason, innate in things and persons, becomes consciously identified with God, or theological, in proportion as he comes to see what is implied in having his being in Universal Reason. He becomes aware of his participation in Deity, by translating into science what was otherwise held in the imperfect form of feeling. Philosophy becomes Christian faith *translated in terms of thought:* the translation makes explicit the *reason* latent in the *feeling*—rendering all into intelligible divine universe. This philosophy would be religion in its intellectual form, assimilating Christianity as the one catholic religion. It virtually claims to *be* religion, so far as religion is intellectual or theological; not necessarily to the exclusion of religion in the more practical form of feeling, emotion, and faith. And if theology is the intellectual interpretation and co-ordination of man's final relation to the divine universe of reality, Hegelian philosophy is Hegelian theology; the two are synonymous. Hegelian dialectic becomes theology, or divine thought elaborated — *sub specie æternitatis*, as Spinoza would say. It appears as if at the opposite pole to every modification of agnosticism. Nevertheless the elasticity of Hegelian thought allows the extremes unexpectedly to approach one another.

Questions suggested by the Theism of Hegel.

Is a philosopher justified by facts and reason when he announces the discovery of the perfect rational articulation of the universe in the Universal Reason called God? Is all that is implied in the actual existence of *things*, and above all in the moral agency of *persons*, relieved of mystery? Are the enigmas which have put so severe a strain upon faith found to disappear, by a complete translation of theistic faith into theistic thought — dialectically unfolded? Is faith found to be exchanged for perfect intellectual vision, in an intelligible reconciliation of

the universe of nature and spirit in God? Is this philosophy able to accommodate *all* the facts for which it is bound by its profession to provide room: or must we all still bear, in the form of moral venture, a burden of mystery, which neither this nor any other intellectual interpretation of the universe that is comprehensible by man is able to eliminate? Does Hegelian thought fully recognise man's experience—all in it which can vindicate its genuineness; and the need in reason for recognising all, shown by the alternative *reductio ad absurdum*, in the sceptical disintegration of knowledge that follows if they are disallowed or overlooked. Does German philosophy in and since Kant adequately measure the depth of the Pyrrhonism which it is bound to supersede? When we are told that "all things and persons exist in God," does this mean that nothing exists or can exist except God? Does it mean that so much reality in visible and tangible *things* as is implied in their being reliable media of intercourse between persons is illusion; and also that faith in the originative power of *persons*, in their morally responsible acts, is misleading? How can persons retain their individual personality, if their so-called personal activity —evil as well as good—is really the activity of God? Must not every finite person be able to originate acts for which he is answerable—to originate acts, too, which *ought not* to be acted, which, therefore, there was no necessity in reason for him to originate? Are all acts that enter into existence divine—the malignant will of the murderer, equally with the philanthropic or saintly life—are these all alike acts of God?

There are especially two mysteries from the burden of which I do not find the promised intellectual relief in this system of thought—

Does it solve the mystery of finite persons, their moral power, and their immoral acts?

(1) I cannot see in the dialectically evolved divine necessity an explanation of the existence of personal agents, who must be blamed for acts which ought not to exist—acts for which there is no rational necessity that they should exist. Are not all immoral acts *undivine?* How does the divine dialectical necessity transform faith in personal responsibility into perfectly

intelligible science? Does it do more than cover with a new vocabulary what is still mystery—hid in final unknowableness—as distinguished from human knowledge?

Or of timelessness, combined with historical reality?

(2) Then there is the mystery of endless existence, in its relation to measurable time—the alternative of unbeginning and unending natural succession *versus* a timeless consciousness. While human understanding has to face this mystery of mysteries, how does the dialectical procedure transform the faith into science? Is what we call past or future really past or future? Is the natural evolution which faith assumes to be in real fulfilment gradually in time—is all this illusion; so that whatever happens must, as a temporal, be unreal, and the words "before" and "after" symbols of error?

Lotze.

In relation to all this I find wisdom in words of perhaps the most considerate thinker among later Germans. The words suggest the inadequacy of abstract reason to explain mysteries, which nevertheless it may enable us to co-ordinate, but only in subordination to the moral faith which, I have tried to show, is man's final attitude to the universal problem. "The universal propositions, upon which human knowledge depends," says Lotze, "are judgments which do not tell us that anything concrete is, or is taking place; they only declare what must exist, or must take place, in case certain imperfectly known conditions should actually occur: they merely express general rules which we must follow in the intellectual construction of the content of our ideas. On the contrary, those propositions upon which the special interest of religion depends—for example, that God has created the world, and that the soul of man survives death—these are judgments which assert particular concrete facts. The first-mentioned general propositions are nothing but abstract expressions of forms of activity according to which reason, in its own abstract nature, must be exercised. On the other hand, declarative propositions which assert facts with respect to the ordering of a world that is more than abstract reason, cannot with equal legitimacy be regarded as the innate endowment of our intelligence only, but are in some sort the result of our experience."

Thus the *rationale* of the religious conception of the universe seems to resolve at last into the faith which is incomplete science, sustained by the spiritual constitution of man—according to the *homo mensura*, or the *divina mensura* humanised—as the only legitimate human attitude in the end. This implies an important question about the limiting conditions of human understanding, which I will next consider. Science and Faith.

LECTURE VIII.

FINAL FAITH.

The final problem of the universe is the signal object-lesson for measuring man's intelligence.

THE final human problem about the universe may be taken as man's signal object-lesson for illustrating the limit of his power to comprehend the data of sensuous and moral experience. Can our final relation to the realities be found through exercise of understanding only? Must not the reasonableness of our final interpretation of life in the universe depend on other resources than those provided by scientific intelligence? Must not our emotional and moral constitution be at work, when we seek to assure ourselves as to how the world that we are living and having our being in is ultimately affected towards us? Is it possible for man to eliminate all in it that is mysterious, or incompletely subject to his intelligence? Is an all-comprehending vision of the infinite reality, in a wholly unmysterious, either intuited or logically articulated, system, within reach? Is man potentially omniscient, if not as yet perhaps with a full conscious omniscience in any case? Can his intelligence dispense with a necessary remainder of the incompletely intelligible, left for optimist faith to assimilate? Is not the contrary supposition impossible, unless man is identified with God — his incarnate consciousness completely one with the Universal Consciousness? If impossible, moral trust and hope *must* be *man's* highest form of life at last, in relation to what is completely intelligible only at the Divine centre, from which he is eternally excluded, as entrance into it would mean deification. Under these

conditions reason imposes on us religious or reverential contentment with broken knowledge, which at last takes the form of active religious trust.

Alternatives which must be faced by a philosophy that promises to transform final faith into final science.

These questions are suggested by attempts of philosophers and theologians to think out the ego, and the outer world in its evolution, as in God and so emptied of mysterious incompleteness. They promise relief from the discomfort of finite knowledge in the form of a final faith necessarily burdened with mysteries. The moral postulate out of which theism emerges cannot, of course, admit what is self-contradictory, or faith that can be *shown* to be irrational. But may the practical faith-venture, instead of conformity to this merely negative criterion, be transformed, in a human mind, into unmysterious insight—unclouded mental vision—*coextensive* as it were with the infinite reality? If a philosopher says that it can, and that this transformation has actually been accomplished, let us make sure that no convictions indispensable, because the alternative to total doubt, are converted into illusions in the process;—rejected because they cannot be provided with accommodation in the science that is offered in exchange for moral faith. For we are in that case face to face with the alternative of either rejecting a philosophy that is obliged to *spoil* indispensable root-convictions, in order to embrace them in its all-comprehensive claims, or of discrediting the convictions, in order to save the philosophy that must be inadequate if they are retained. In order to rise wholly out of the incomplete knowledge of the universe, which in the end needs theistic or optimist trust instead of perfect vision, shall we adopt a system which contains seeds of total scepticism? Should we not rather regard the offered philosophy as a failure, if it cannot accept in their integrity the root-convictions which human life needs, and without which man becomes pessimist and wholly sceptical?

Locke formally raised the question of the limits

It was partly the speculative intrepidity of Spinoza that, at the end of the seventeenth century, after his death, raised the most humanly significant controversy of modern thought—that between final agnosticism, final gnosticism,

of man's knowledge.

and the final combination of agnosticism with gnosticism, in which the last word is moral faith in the perfect goodness or reasonableness of the end towards which all things are making;—towards which, in virtue of the moral postulate implied in experience, we are obliged to assume that they are making. John Locke was in this matter the earliest spokesman of modern religious thought. For it was he who deliberately raised the question of the limits of a human understanding of the realities: he would even unduly restrain attempts to translate human faith into the divine vision. Locke set to work to find how far a human understanding could go in knowledge. He was the first announced representative of this investigation. Yet one need not take his famous 'Essay,' in which the inquiry is only initiated, as an adequate settlement of our present question about the power of man as a thinker to think all mystery out of his universe, as from the Divine Centre; in a philosophy or theology which should make all that is presented fully understood. Locke only opened the way to the question now at issue between thorough-going agnosticism, thorough-going gnosticism, and the conciliation of the two in the optimist faith which accepts something from each of the extremes. The question came to a crisis when the nineteenth century was confronted by one philosophy that found its apotheosis in the Unknowable, and another philosophy which seems to claim Infinite Reality as within comprehension.

The infinite "ocean of Being."

The philosophic caution that is characteristic of Locke finds utterance in sentences in his 'Essay,' which tell of its occasion and design. The 'Essay' was the issue of the perplexities in which human understanding is involved when man tries to comprehend all mysteries. "This it was," Locke tells us, "which gave the first rise to this Essay concerning human understanding. For I thought that the first step towards satisfying several inquiries the mind of man was very apt to run into, was to take a view of our own understanding, examine our own powers, and see to what things they were adapted. Till that was done, I suspected we began at the wrong end, and in vain sought for satisfaction in a quiet and sure

possession of the truths that most concerned us, whilst we let loose our thought in the vast ocean of Being;—as if all that boundless extent were the natural and undisputed possession of human understanding, wherein there was nothing exempt from its decisions or that escaped its comprehension. Thus men extending their inquiries beyond their capacities, and letting their thoughts wander into those depths where they can find no sure footing, it is no wonder that they raise questions and multiply disputes; which, never coming to any clear resolution, are proper only to increase their doubts, and to confirm them at last in perfect Scepticism." Locke's tone in this enterprise has been deprecated as an illustration of the speculative indifference and compromising intellectual mediocrity of a practical Englishman. We are also told that the only way to determine the extreme resources of man's understanding is for men to make trial: let us enter the water, without first seeking to find, in this abstract way, whether we are able to swim; let us persist in trying, in hope of attaining intellectual vision of the infinite universe of reality.

Criticism of Reason as in man.

To *show* that human knowledge of the universe must at last be left incomplete, or charged with mysteries, presupposes that reality *is* knowable by men, although divine omniscience is not within his reach. Now the inquirer who recognises that he already knows *something*, may perhaps find points at which reason itself forbids further approach to completeness, under the inevitable human conditions of thought and experience;—the point, for instance, at which understanding is arrested by the absence of experience; or by the discovery that there are indispensable constituents and convictions of human nature which are spoiled when they are taken as rendered in the professedly all-comprehensive philosophy. It may be found that such convictions cannot be held in spiritual integrity in the purely intellectual way; inasmuch as the spirit in man—emotional and moral as well as intellectual—may be required as our attitude towards what the human mind can only in part realise in speculative imagination. If it should turn out on inquiry to be so,

what I called man's "participation" in the Universal Reason would then be *finally* an act of trust—trust in what his spiritual constitution requires and authorises, but which he is unable to unfold in a wholly *un*-mysterious philosophy. In this way submission to what is reasonable would at last bear the character of submission to *trusted authority*. It would be the issue of the living action of *the whole man at his best*, in response to the infinite or finally divine universe, to which he awoke in dim sense-perception at first. This is what I mean when I speak of human attempts to determine the final meaning and outcome of the universe, as being, in their highest possible human form, *reasonable faith* rather than *completed science*. Man, as Goethe says, is not born to solve scientifically the problem of the universe, but rather to find out where the problem begins.

In its final outcome, man's knowledge of the universe takes the form of morally reasonable faith.

Is not the otherwise impassable gulf between Omniscience — towards which advance in *our* scientific knowledge is no more an approach than addition of finite spaces is an approach to immensity, or addition of finite times an approach to Eternity—and *our* scientific understanding of the universe thus practically crossed—sufficiently for human purposes? It is bridged over by our spiritual humanity, in its rationally authoritative, because indispensable, needs—our larger reason, enlarged in faith — reason authoritative, as distinguished from sensuous understanding? I call our final faith and hope *authoritative* reason, so far as it is faith and hope imposed by something in the mind different from logical premisses: it cannot be shown directly to contradict logical intelligence, although the reality cannot be adequately represented in scientific imagination. This may be adapted for man, while infinitely insufficient. As distinguished from complete knowledge, this final trust accepts the necessary scientific incompleteness in a faith which at least cannot be disproved, and which accepts symbol or ritual in lack of the unrealisable in imaginative thought.

Reason in Man thus becomes finally an

Faith—trust—authority. These words seem not unfitted to express the final attitude of the human spirit towards the universe in which we find ourselves. Properly

speaking, we *know* only what is *completely* comprehended: we *submit in faith* to the *authority* of our spiritual constitution, when it moves us to assent to what can be only symbolically conceived. In this way reason in man, it may be said, is at last authority: for at last intelligence, with limited experience, is not logical conclusion, but spontaneous postulate. It is of the nature of optimist trust. Our final interpretation of the universe, so unlike in many ways to what man might have expected in a divine universe, is the interpretation of a fragment of perfect reason; or of perfect love, because perfect goodness. Working conviction—the object of which cannot be fully translated into imaginable thought—seems to be the condition under which man exercises intelligence, or which must determine his finally reasonable attitude towards the universe in God. It is a *crede ut intelligas* in which *intelligo* is partly contained in the *crede;* it is not the *intellige ut credas* in which omniscience or perfect intelligence is the precondition of the *credo;* and so philosophers may dispute as to how far the *credendum* is *intelligendum.* This final faith is implicit knowledge, but for man unimaginable knowledge, of infinite reality: it is the human equivalent for Omniscience. We live at last in faith, resting on the "authority" of finally incomplete knowledge. We rest on trusted principles that are not logically proved conclusions. In the end— authoritative principle.

> "We have but faith: we cannot know;
> For knowledge is of things we see;
> And yet we trust it comes from Thee,
> A beam in darkness: let it grow.
>
> Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell;
> That mind and soul, according well,
> May make one music as before,
> But vaster."

It seems to be thus that man rises above the finite and transitory, while incapable of complete intellectual satisfaction—an attitude disparaged by those who resent the limitation. The Universal Power is unknowable by And leaves a room for knowledge that "passes

knowledge."

man, by physical methods, and in the physically scientific meaning of the term knowledge. Yet, in a larger meaning, this final faith or trust is itself called knowledge; as when St Paul says, "I *know* in whom I have believed," or when St John exclaims that "we *know* that we *know* Him." The "knowledge" that "God is love" is the inevitable implicate of final faith in Omnipotent Goodness.

The dutiful obedience of understanding in Man to the rational authority of final Faith.

I seem to find this philosophy incipient in those aphorisms of Bacon which express final faith in physical nature. In words spoken by Jesus in Palestine, one finds final faith as the moral and spiritual attitude towards the Universal Power. In the "natura non *nisi parendo* vincitur," Bacon strikes the key-note of reverential submission to an authoritative voice, which must not be gainsaid, although it is only imperfectly comprehensible; accepted at last in an act of obedience rather than of victorious intelligence. And is not a like idea at the root of the declaration that "if any man *will do* God's will, he shall know"? Not through man exercising himself as a thinking being only, but through the response of the entire man—still in an incomplete "knowledge." It is only thus that it is open to man to dispose of his supreme problem, with its infinite intellectual burden. Perhaps the chief profit of struggling for the perfect vision may be the profound religious lesson of its inaccessibility.

Revelations of God in the actual universe that are imperfectly reducible intellectually by Man.

The perfect science in which human spirits only participate is reverential submission even in the most philosophic human thought, if the time-measured consciousness of finite intelligence and omniscience are at the end harmonised only in unimaginable thought. And we must also submit to the mystery of man's personal power to create acts that ought not to be acted, acts inconsistent with Divine Reason, and for which the human person, not the Power at the heart of the universe, is alone responsible. These two with other mysteries bar perfect vision. The burden of the first is not removed by explaining away history, and resolving the whole at last into Universal Consciousness—freed from the illusion of succession; nor is the mystery of the other relieved by disclaiming moral responsibility for man, and thinking of persons as non-moral. The

reality of a past and a future disappears in the one explanation, so that the words "before" and "after" become meaningless, with consequent scepticism as to evolution of external nature and of man. And if God can be self-revealed as real agent in what are called immoral acts of man, how can this be reconciled with the inevitable self-accusation of which the immoral man is conscious, which postulates that *he* is the origin of the acts? Or how does it consist with our reprobation of the immoral person?

Do we find relief for the mysteries of "endlessness" and "moral evil" in absolute idealism?

It is difficult to see that modern thought of the Hegelian sort has done much towards translating even these two mysteries—an eternally evolving universe, and morally responsible personality—out of the darkness in which they must remain unless man can become God. Philosophy may show, notwithstanding, that those dualisms—continuous change and absolute endlessness—physical causality and moral freedom—are *not necessarily inconsistent with reason.* It may also show that moral reason obliges us to live under their pressure, although we cannot fully think either of them out in a scientific image, but must be content with a *fragment* at the last. Moreover, a Universal Consciousness that is supposed to reduce to illusion the temporal procession of events, and to explain away the moral economy of persons who are independent enough to originate acts that ought not to be acted,—this Universal Consciousness, or system of rational relations, while called "Spirit," begins to resemble the Universal Substance of Spinoza, of which nothing could be predicated, while it takes only a semblance of meaning from the illusory things and persons presented in time. The intellectual vision which was to give relief seems to an imperfect God in a gradual process of self-development, revealed in what is after all an illusory revelation;—at least if we are bound to think God revealed in and through the conscious acts of persons who are not really persons.

The "organic unity" is incompletely imaginable unity, if

On the other hand, is it more than the pretence of a perfectly explained "organic unity" that Hegelian thought presents, if it saves the reality of outward events, and of finite persons with their self-originated changes; and if it is fit to rescue divine perfection from responsibility

it saves finite personality.

for immoral actions of men? It is true that individual persons are not conceived by the Hegelian to be mechanically parts of God, although they have their true reality in Him; but their "organic unity" in Him seems to be only a term to cover a relation still left in the mystery of necessarily incomplete imaginative thought. It is an organic unity that passes human realisation; although it is innocent of the gross idea which makes all things and all persons only physical parts of One Boundless Substance, or physical effects of One Unknowable Power.

And the mysteries of endlessness and moral evil are only verbally relieved.

That Hegel, and many who are called Hegelians, mean their final thought to be consistent with the actuality of the world, and with the moral personality of man, I do not deny; nor perhaps can one fairly interpret this philosophy or theology "pantheistically"—in the obnoxious sense that involves final moral, and therefore final physical, agnosticism. Its fundamental unity is perhaps elastic enough to admit of being interpreted so as to comprehend—but in some still mysterious way—the world of successive nature, and the world of human spirits, without spoiling the actuality of the world, or the freedom of persons to create actions referable to their responsible causation. But if so, this implies the need for faith, or incompleted knowledge, at last. Yet we were led to expect that through Hegelian dialectic final faith could be wholly translated into philosophic science, with the burden of its mystery all removed —not merely with the mysteries verbally articulated in a more scientific form. If there is here more than amended systematic expression of the old difficulties, one fails to find it, as long as, notwithstanding Hegel, the burden still oppresses that resisted all former attempts so to think out the universe as to eliminate, for example, the two mysteries which I have taken as illustrations of man's inadequacy of imaginative thought. Philosophy still remains knowledge of something that in the end passes realisable knowledge,—known for the ends of a life which can be lived well if we will; unknown, because inconceivable in the infiniteness of reality. It only shows the constructive co-operation of *human* intelligence in a world conceived after all from the human point of view. So

intellectual analysis of human experience seems always to leave at the last a residuum of trust—*authoritative reason*, instead of *infinitely realised reason;*—authoritative reason in which reverential submission to what is trusted in as reasonable is more prominent than completely victorious insight. Surely the authority of reasonable faith and hope can be wholly dispensed with only in the Omniscience which leaves no room for incomplete knowledge.

The Hegelian intellectual analysis may be making a more modest claim.

So after all it may be only the question of how the final attitude of man to what is of human interest in the universe of reality should be *named*, rather than difference with regard to what the attitude must at last *actually be*, that separates those who suppose that they are adopting, from those who suppose that they are rejecting, an ideal philosophy of man and the universe as fully explained in God. Is it best called *knowledge—thought—reason;* or *faith—trust—authority?* To call it "knowledge" seems to claim too much, as long as there is an *inevitable* remainder of mystery, which leaves the knowledge incomplete—an unimaginable or mysterious unity. To call it "faith" may seem to empty it of all that is not individual or subjective; for truth is not secured by the most confident credulity. As for "authority," the word perhaps suggests deference to a person, instead of the impersonal obligation that belongs to reasonable proof. But if those who prefer to call it "reason" or "knowledge" disclaim for man the omniscience which they otherwise seem to assume, then their philosophy—at last obliged to submit to arrest—is really faith that in the end, and throughout, trusts in what is not fully open to man's comprehension. Then the difficulties in which the inevitable remainder of final ignorance involve every human mind do not forbid man from satisfying the demand of the *homo mensura* principle, according to human nature in its spiritual or divine integrity.

Hegelian speculation humanised.

An intellectual analysis of religion, including Christianity, that adopts this attitude, would probably be regarded by some as not inconsistent with Hegelian theology or

philosophy, with its interpretation of the universe of things and persons in terms of the Universal Reason. The "organic unity" of Nature and Man in God then admits the moral freedom of agents responsible for themselves when they act immorally, and also the reality of temporal succession. "Identity" with Universal Reason, and "organic unity" of the universe, are then as emphatic expressions of the truth, that men are not isolated psychological atoms, but members of a moral totality, in which final moral faith in us is sure to find sympathetic response in the incompletely comprehended Divine Power, perpetually active at the centre of the Whole. So the further man penetrates, the more fully divine order discovers itself; more and more of what corresponds to our final faith is recognised in the principles that are determining the history of the world; and it is seen that, while men are "free" to resist God by doing evil, it is in their harmony with what is divine that the highest freedom is to be found. So understood, Hegelian speculation becomes only a more elaborate dialectical expression of man's dissatisfaction with the transitory phenomena of sense, in perception of which human life begins; and of the obligation which the reason that we call *ours* finds to see the universe of change in dependence on the Perfect Reason that in broken form is involved in our experience, but under which *we* never fully comprehend the Whole. It becomes a vindication of the universe, as incapable of being conceived as mindless, purposeless evolution of phenomena—as the revelation instead of Spirit to spirits—thus relieving the chill of abstract physical science with the warmth of Omnipresent life and love. In the intellectual analysis of Religion, one may in this way be helped to recognise his own moral personality, by its mysterious affinity with the divine system in which it is involved. But even this philosophy would be at last an expression of reason in the form of faith, founded upon needs inherent in imperfect human comprehension. At the best it would represent the most intellectual way of bearing a burden that is too heavy for scientific imagination. It would be man's philosophical acknowledgment of absolute depend-

ence upon the Universal Power that he is nevertheless mysteriously able to resist, in his volitions and voluntarily formed habits. But the fundamental faith is weakened, and dogmatic temper is encouraged, when all assumes the appearance of being fully translated into philosophical thought. The *latent* rationality of the faith may be justified, while it can never be unfolded by man in an exhaustive speculative imagination of the Reality. The justification of the faith lies in this—that the universe of experience dissolves in pessimist doubt when its sustaining influence is withdrawn. The ultimate foundation of proof must be incapable of direct proof, and intellectual reserve should be the characteristic of all human philosophy.

Final Faith and its Enigma.

Final Faith is tacit or implied trust that nothing can happen in the temporal evolution which will finally put to confusion the moral reason latent in Man — incomprehensible as the world's history of mingled good and evil may appear. In what follows we are to contemplate the Great Enigma which threatens to transform Final Faith into Total Doubt.

THIRD PART

THE GREAT ENIGMA OF THEISTIC FAITH

LECTURE I.

EVIL ON THIS PLANET.

I HAVE been trying to show the implicate in reason which demands filial trust in the Universal Power that is finally operative in the universe, and so at the heart of experience. The questions which next meet us are concerned with the supreme difficulty which theistic faith and hope encounter, in a universe which, at least on this planet, presents a strange mixture of what is bad with what is good. This is an obstacle to the religious interpretation of the world, which must be honestly met. But first recollect what we have already found. The supreme difficulty.

It appeared that human experience in the universe tacitly presupposes the ethical trustworthiness of the Power that is continuously revealing itself in its events. Knowledge dissolves, and conduct is paralysed, on the supposition that the Universal Power may be morally untrustworthy; and the world, therefore, even physically uninterpretable, because order, in the evolution of its events, is not to be depended on. Such a universe would be either intended to put us to intellectual and moral confusion; or, if it be an unintended and accidental issue, which may return to chaos, its events would be equally liable to traverse expectation in the end. Moral trust in a perfectly reasonable universe is the needed postulate of experience, for really understanding any fact or change. This fundamental moral trust, at the root of experience, is commonly sub-conscious; it is The Ethical Foundation of the universe.

involved, however, in the trust we all put in our perceptions of things present, in our memories, and in the uniformity of nature. In all these I find ethical faith tacitly implied: a moral acknowledgment that the recollections of memory, and the supposition of physical order, cannot be transitory illusions, in a temporal procession of changes that is all hollow and deceptive, and the whole performance the manifestation, not of trustworthy, but of malignant, or indifferent, or irrational Power. For our activity in the universe is dependent on the optimist faith, that the universe with which we are in constant communication through experience must be morally trustworthy—perfectly good omnipotent Power or Personality being therein omnipresent.

Conscience and Causality.

In this ethical root of experience, one finds the germ of Theism. It is the practically harmonising principle of the threefold articulation of realised existence—the three primary data from which we all start. The universe of reality is finally a *moral* unity, incompletely comprehensible in human intelligence, but which moral reason obliges man to suppose somehow consistent with ideal perfection in the Power that is continually at work in the heart of it. Cosmic faith unconsciously involves this theistic faith; for even physical interpretation of cosmical order must be interpretation of that in which morally trustworthy Power or Personality is being physically revealed. Now, originating power is recognised by man only in morally responsible Will; and there is no reason to suppose that physical causation is more than the language of Active Reason or Will. No merely natural cause *can* be other than a caused cause — all at last effect of moral power, which man conceives of as vital or conscious power. All so-called natural agency may reasonably be regarded as divine agency; — the issue, not indeed of capricious will, but of perfect and constantly operative Reason in the form of Will, which may be trusted not to lead us into illusion, as practical interpreters of its revelations, given through nature and in man.

The physical uni-

We have found, too, that the universe may not unreasonably be interpreted as a universe charged through-

out with adaptation; in which everything is fitted into everything else, in a harmony of means and ends — the Whole adaptable by man, and man's organism adapted to the Whole; adaptation likewise of every sentient being to the Whole, and of the Whole to every sentient being— the adaptations, not all of them visible in our imperfect knowledge, yet legitimately assumed to be latent in the universal constitution.

verse an evolving organism, charged throughout with moral adaptation.

That the ever-changing universe, in which our conscious lives become morally involved during the moment between birth and death, is a procession of natural causes, all in their turn natural effects, in a regress which may even be unbeginning, and that this may continue without end in successive metamorphoses — all this does not seem to militate against the need for our finally interpreting the universe in theistic faith and hope. The mystery of unbeginningness and unendingness, in which the temporal procession of natural events disappears at last, need not involve moral distrust of the Universal Power. The infinite or mysterious duration of the succession of things and persons need not make experience untrustworthy and scientifically unintelligible. To say that the past and future of nature disappear in physical mystery is one way of showing that human intelligence is intermediate between blind Sense and Omniscience. Our conception of the infinite in quantity of extent or of duration is in harmony with this intermediate position. Duration is revealed to us as a quantity that seems to become at last not a quantity, but timeless eternity; and this perplexity, which pursues us everywhere, when we try to reduce the infinite in quantity to the conditions of an understanding that must measure by experience in time, faces us conspicuously when we try in vain to read the riddles with which physical causality and science are finally charged. But the inevitable darkness in which we become involved need not communicate itself to the moral reason, nor disturb ethical trust and hope in the Power that in the end determines experience. That I find myself living in an infinite sphere, the centre of which seems to be everywhere and the circumference nowhere; or in a movement

The insoluble physical mystery into which the outward world at last resolves itself, not necessarily inconsistent with its finally theistic meaning.

of unbeginning and endless change, need not disturb the eternal necessities of moral obligation, and the faith that man's highest relation in all this is to Universal Power that is morally reliable. Although "clouds and darkness" are round about the revelation of this Power, which is revealed in external nature and in the spirit of man, yet "righteousness and judgment" must be "the establishment of its throne"; and our use of experience presupposes that the whole natural process must be making for the righteousness in which is the divine ideal.

Duration in its blended finitude and infinitude, analogous to the practical revelation, yet final incomprehensibility, of God.

What is finite in quantity and its Infinite are mysteriously blended in our idea of duration—at once infinite and finite, subject to finite measures of time, yet finally immeasurable;—either way incomprehensible. The temporal process inevitably resolves at last into what transcends temporal limits, so that the issues are perceived only as what is beyond imaginative thought. For interminable duration is unimaginable; a million, or a million times a million, of years, being still finite, is imaginable—although a human imagination cannot distinctly picture so prolonged a succession: but *endlessness* is absolutely unpicturable, for a picture contradicts the thought: yet to suppose duration an illusion is not less incomprehensible. Succession or change is thus at once cognisable and incognisable in human intelligence—signally illustrating what the universe of our experience in so many ways illustrates, when intelligence measured by sense tries fully to realise the Power or Personality that finally animates the whole. God, like duration, is at once intellectually apprehended and yet the final mystery—revealed for man, in man; and in all natural causation, when external nature is conceived according to the analogy of what is highest in man.

Personality.

The word "person" has been objected to as unfit for designating the omnipresent Power or Principle that pervades and harmonises the cosmic organism, making its evolutions the object of more or less developed morally religious trust, and adoration to the persons it contains. To our crude idea of personality the Universal Power as personal seems a contradiction. Infinite Being, it is

argued, because all-comprehensive, must be the negation of personality: for personality is antithetical to something else that is not personal, and therefore excluded from the person. This seems to make personality finite. So I am asked by a critic to explain how Omnipresent Being can be personal: ubiquity and personality seem to him irreconcilable as light and darkness.

Personality as attributed by man to the Universal Power.

Those who allege this objection to the finally ethical or religious interpretation of existence seem to include in their idea of personality what I should exclude as irrelevant, — irrelevant perhaps even when the term is applied to human beings, certainly when applied to the Universal Power. Does not the faith on which experience reposes—the faith that the universe is finally trustworthy, and that I am morally free—put man in an *ethical* relation to this Power? Now, if "person," as distinguished from "thing," is taken as a term which signalises *moral* relation, and implies moral as contrasted with merely mechanical or physical agency; and if the universe, in its final principle, is practically treated as an object of moral trust, when we live in obedience to its laws—does not this mean that it is *virtually* personal, for us revelation of a person rather than of a thing—that we are in constant communication with Perfect Person, not merely with infinite Thing? If our deepest relation must be ethical trust in perfect wisdom and goodness, making for the goodness of all finite persons in all worlds —trust in the adaptations of the universe to all who are willing to be physically and morally adapted to it — this practically means that our deepest relation to reality is ethical rather than physical: that *personality* instead of *thingness* is the highest form under which *man* can conceive God. This is final moral personification, or religious conception, of the universe of experience.

The Infinite or finally mysterious Person.

But this primary and inevitable moral postulate does not oblige, or even permit, those who—for the reason now suggested—speak of God as "Person" to affirm of God all that is involved in our imperfect personality, any more than the use of the common term duration,

when we speak of a short duration and eternal duration, obliges us to suppose that eternity must be conditioned like measurable time. The "personality" of God need not mean that the Being adumbrated in Nature and Man is embodied and individual self-conscious life, like the human,—that God is organised and extended, as man now is—or omnipresent as in sensuous imagination; or that God has a conscious experience, that is subject like ours to change of conscious state. Ubiquity and eternity we have found to be for us terms which express commingled comprehension and necessary incomprehensibility. The Augustinian "Eternal Now," instead of conscious change, as appropriate to Divine Intelligence, hardly helps us; for subtraction of Past and Future seems not to consist with the reality of change and of evolution, or with difference between what has happened and what has not yet happened. It seems to dissolve all supposed past and prospective realities into illusions. Personality in man, moreover, implies memory; but we are not bound to suppose that the religious conception of the universe implies memory in the Perfect Person with whom all experience brings us into constant intercourse. Also a human intelligence of the world involves reasoning, on the part of human persons; but it does not follow that the Perfect Person who speaks to us in the universe of nature and man must be conscious of deducing conclusions from premisses, or of generalising under conditions of inductive calculation. The "personality of God" is a formula which implies that, in relation to us—or at the human point of view—the Universal Power, manifested in nature and in man, must be regarded at last ethically, not physically—therefore as an imperfectly conceived Person, not as an imperfectly conceived Thing.

The physical mystery of the universe, not the chief obstacle to a finally moral or

But the final mystery of unbeginning and unending cosmos, and others involved in physical evolution, are not after all the pressing "burden and mystery of this unintelligible world." For a universe in which the finite in quantity and the infinite are so blended as in the end to transcend human science, is not inconsistent with absolute filial trust on the part of the persons who are participating

in this mysterious physical existence. Their religious interpretation of the Whole, in spite of those intellectual difficulties, is still ready to relieve the agnostic embarrassment that arises when a *physically* scientific solution of the infinite problem of the universe is expected in vain, and in an experience that cannot be lived and acted in reasonably after paralysis of final moral trust. Granted that man cannot explain how or why God exists, or indeed why any thing or person should exist at all. This human ignorance is surely not a sufficient objection to the application of the primary ethical postulate to our life in the changing world in which we find ourselves. theistic interpretation of it.

The formidable obstacle to ultimate moral trust in the Universal Power revealed in the universe, is found, not in the physical mysteries, spatial and temporal, or because *they* evade scientific imagination, but in the living contents of this planet. Here much is found that *ought not to exist.* Here what is bad is mixed up with what is good—what is immoral with what is moral. Capricious distribution of pain seems to be as much the custom of the Universal Power as happiness, which the world, as a revelation of ethically trustworthy and therefore gracious Power, might be expected to present universally. Ignorance and error, moreover, take the place of intelligent insight, more or less, in all human minds: reason, "the candle of the Lord," in the light of which sentient beings might escape many evils, and might attain to more good, — this candle of the Lord burns so dimly in all human minds that even those who have the largest share of it complain that it only shines enough to show the darkness. But pain and error may be evils only relatively, incidents natural to gradually developing intelligence and goodness: at a higher point of view they may, perhaps, appear to be absolutely good. At least they are less formidable obstacles to religious trust and hope than wicked human acts, which contradict the ethical ideal, and which must therefore be absolutely evil. If what is wicked *can* enter into existence in the inner life of men, what trust can be The mixture of Evil with Good in the universe is the supreme enigma.

put in the moral perfection—and consequent making for goodness in all persons, for the sake of goodness—in the Power that is at the root of all? The universe now begins to look untrustworthy, its phenomena therefore uninterpretable, and human life hopeless.

How can moral perfection be predicated of the Universal Power, when that Power is revealed in the form of a world which contains evil?

It is a fact that *somehow* persons on this planet are not as they ought to be. Experience shows our world to be now "in a very strange state," as Bishop Butler used to say; and it does not appear that it was ever not so, or that all men will ever be found perfectly good. How then can the Universal Power be Omnipotent Goodness, when the continuous evolution of blended things and persons, in which the character of that Power is supposed to be revealed, contains evil? A person's character is judged of by his actions: the action of the Power that is continuously operative in the universe of our experience, when it issues in evil, seems inconsistent with the primary moral postulate of experience.

Our experience is confined to the sentient beings on this planet, and even in this is limited in space and duration.

It is true that man's experience of the universe is confined to a very narrow corner of it—chiefly to this remote, transitory planet—and to a small part of what it contains. Indeed, as far as man's knowledge goes, sentient beings and self-conscious persons exist only within this little planet; which thus for him contains *all* that makes the final problem interesting and ominous. If our universe had consisted only of molecules and matter in motion, without sentient beings, and responsible persons, who feel, and think, and will, its theistic significance would be gone, in the absence of all who could realise it. Apart from the relations of outward things to the sentient and personal life of which our world is the scene, what good or evil can be attributed to dead matter? The mixed good and evil of the universe, as far as man's experience can carry him, resolves into the good or evil that is found in the sensitive, intellectual, and moral state of *living* beings on this planet. But what are they, we may be asked, as examples of the Whole? Our planet, compared to the stellar system, is less than a grain of sand compared to all the grains in the solar system; and its living occupants may be more insignificant in

relation to the Whole than the living occupants of that grain of sand in relation to all the living beings that inhabit the earth. Nor, after all, can man reasonably assume that the possession of moral agents is a peculiarity of this planet alone in the stellar universe. Each of the innumerable millions of suns with their attendant planets may be similarly occupied; or some may be empty and others crowded with living beings; and personal life need not be confined to organisms located on planets, or exclude spirits able to range through space, or even existing unembodied. There may be sentient beings whose intelligence is brought by *their* senses into relation with a material world that presents none of the qualities which matter presents to us; inasmuch as they are endowed with none of our senses, but instead with five, or fifty, or five hundred senses wholly alien to those of man. These and innumerable other *possibilities* are open, and may minimise indefinitely the importance of the mingled good and evil in the current of moral and sentient life, as it flows through men and other animals on this planet, so limited in its extent, and with a duration so brief of its individual embodied lives.

But after all these limitations do not much affect the present question. Ethical trust in the absolute perfection of the power at work in the universe is inconsistent with any evil in its remotest corner, as much as with a universe of unmixed evil. *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus.* Trust is shaken even in a man who is anywhere, or at any time, doing what is wrong; and no man is omnipotent and omniscient. Much more must a single evil destroy ethical trust and hope in the Universal Power. To believe in Perfect Goodness is to believe that *all* is as it ought to be; and this faith is disturbed if *anything* is found existing which ought not to exist, however insignificant the place in which it is found, and however rare the occurrence. One such issue seems to darken Infinite Goodness. And for man the issues on this planet are his all in all. He interprets the moral universe by the only specimen of it which enters into his limited experience.

But this does not relieve the difficulty of any Evil being found anywhere, in a universe which we are obliged to suppose ethically trustworthy at the root.

Now, the hardest difficulty which man has to meet in

The existence of living beings in the strange state in which those on this planet are found.

putting a religious interpretation upon the universe is not the existence of natural causes—unwarrantably supposed to expel instead of to reveal God. It is the bad state in which man finds men, and other sentient beings too, on his small planetary home. It may be true that we cannot so distinguish the possible from the impossible as to assert with some theological pessimists that this is the worst world possible; nor even that it is so bad that it were better for men to pass for ever out of conscious life than to persist in it under the given conditions. Yet, at the least, the history of this planet forms a revelation of Omnipotent Goodness unlike what an intelligent being, obliged to presuppose goodness in the universe, might be apt to expect.

This difficulty as put by David Hume.

Philo puts the case plainly in Hume's 'Dialogues': "It must, I think, be allowed that if a limited human intelligence, utterly unacquainted with the actual universe, were assured, before trial, that it was the production of a very good, wise, and powerful Being, he would in his conjectures form beforehand a very different notion of it from what we find it to be by experience; nor would he ever imagine, merely from those attributes of its cause of which he was previously informed, that the effect could be so full of vice and misery and disorder as it appears in this passing life. Supposing, indeed, that this person were brought into the world assured (on *a priori* grounds) that it was the workmanship of such a sublime and benevolent Being, he might perhaps be surprised at the disappointment, but would never retract his former belief, if founded on any solid argument; — since such a limited intelligence must be sensible of his own blindness and ignorance, and must therefore allow that there *may* be many solutions of these phenomena which will for ever escape his comprehension. But supposing, which is the real case with regard to man (?) that this intelligent creature is *not antecedently* convinced of a Supreme Intelligence, *benevolent and powerful*, but is left to gather such a belief *solely* from the appearances of things, this entirely alters the case; nor will he ever find any reason for such a conclusion. He may be fully convinced of the narrow

limits of his own understanding; but this will not, *in these circumstances*, help him to infer the goodness of the omnipotent Power; since he must form his inference from the facts he knows, not from what he is ignorant of. The more you exaggerate his weakness and ignorance, the more diffident you render him, and give him the greater suspicion that such subjects are beyond his faculties."

It is an insoluble difficulty for empirical philosophy; but this philosophy is itself paralysed, even in its physical interpretations, when all ethical or theistic trust is withdrawn.

This is distinctly put. One cannot infer a good artist from a bad picture, especially if he has only the one picture to go upon for his conclusion. And if the philosophy of the universe must be, as with Hume, *wholly empirical*, it is not only impossible to conclude that the world is the revelation of Omnipotent Goodness,—it is also impossible to interpret any of its phenomena for any useful purpose, or indeed to make any inference about anything. Is there an alternative to a universal doubt, if we may in reason *suspect* the moral integrity of the Power manifested to us in nature and in man? Not to speak of physical science, can any reasonable movement even of our bodies be made, if we finally distrust the Power that we must in all our experience continually rest upon? No doubt the narrow limit of our *physical* experience on this planet does not experimentally demonstrate to us the fact that the Universal Power must be perfectly good: intellectual finitude only infers that man does not know enough to necessitate the belief that the suspicious phenomena are *inconsistent* with perfection in the Power that they reveal. But if ethical perfection of the Universal Power must be presupposed as the indispensable condition on which self and the world are interpretable, and life fit to be lived—this necessary postulate is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the dogma, that a wholly empirical ultimate premiss, like that supplied by Hume, is adequate philosophically. A primary premiss that is wholly empirical, and takes nothing for granted, can never get us under weigh. Moral trust in the Universal Power must be postulated, to enable man to make way at all either in science or in conduct.

Pain, error, sin, and

Animal suffering, human pain; misinterpretation of experience; violation of moral order, by the occurrence of

death are the chief Evils presented in the human experience of the universe.

acts inconsistent with obligation to man and God; death, which painfully separates persons united in fellowship, and brings the curtain down before the act is well begun, and almost before the dying persons have had time to know where and why they exist,—*these*, I suppose, are some of the evils which, on this small planet, seem at variance with even fairness in the Universal Power,—on faith in whom human knowledge and life tacitly repose. It is suspicious facts like these that tend to paralyse the primary ethical postulate of human experience. For what crimes do animals endure the torments which so many undergo in the evolutions of nature? What good purpose is served by the miseries of which things are natural causes —to men and to other animated beings; and which, if all natural causation is really divine causation under natural conditions, must all be caused by God? On this planet Nature often looks cruel and unrelenting, or at least indifferent to the pains and pleasures of its sentient inhabitants. And the seeming cruelty or indifference is, for all we can tell, presented on a greater scale in other parts of the stellar universe than on this little planet. Do not stars suddenly disappear — in collision, it may be, with other stars—involving, we may fancy, the sudden death in agony of their sentient passengers; or continuous suffering beforehand, while the natural changes were gradually unfitting their world for living occupants?

The existence of moral evil in this part of the universe is the final difficulty in theistic faith.

But the greatest enigma presented to man is the existence *in man* of what ought not to exist, — the rise of what philosophers call moral evil, or what Christian theologians call sin. Must not that which moral reason pronounces to be absolutely inconsistent with the vitalised moral obligation which the religious conception involves, and on which our faith finally reposes,—must not *that* be contradictory of theistic faith and hope? Pain, error, and death may be evil only as seen at a human point of view. Sin is absolutely evil. Pain is the correlative of pity and sympathy: it is a natural and therefore divine means for the education of spiritual life. Moreover, the assumption that pleasure ought to be the

supreme end of moral agents is one which reason would find it difficult to sustain. The ideal of what Cudworth calls the "intellectual system of the universe" is something higher than pleasure, as one may argue from the constitution of man and its still dormant ideal.

For Sin cannot, like Pain, be explained as only relatively Evil.

But the continued presence of what is *unconditionally bad* cannot be disposed of in this way. How to relieve the mystery of moral evil, including what seems an unfair distribution of pleasure and pain, and an unfair adjustment of individual opportunities for moral growth, has been the human perplexity from the beginning. It finds expression in Hebrew poets like Job, and in Greek dramatists like Æschylus. Can it be reconciled with final moral trust and hope in the Power that is universally revealed in external and spiritual experience, or must we subside into total scepticism?

Either Manicheist Dualism, or else One imperfect, or One wholly indifferent, Power, offered as solutions of Evil.

That this universe of commingled good and evil must be the issue of a constant struggle between two rival Eternal Powers, the one benevolent, the other malevolent, is an ancient explanation of those strange appearances. The explanation is symbolised in the Zoroastrian antithesis of Ormuzd and Ahriman, and it is not without advocates in the modern world. Its implied subversion of the primary ethical postulate, without which experience is untrustworthy, must alone discredit this dualist hypothesis, with those who are not prepared to yield at last to universal agnosticism and pessimist despair. A like difficulty attends the Monism, which concludes, either that the Universal Power, revealed in the world, is a Power of mixed good and evil, corresponding to the mixed phenomena which surround us; or else that it is Power blindly indifferent to happiness or misery, moral good or moral evil. Manichean dualism, in the form of two eternal Powers, good and evil, and Monism, or a single eternal Power, partly good and partly evil, or else indifferent, are both inconsistent with the indispensable moral faith and hope.

"Temptation by the Devil" only a pro-

Again. The traditional teaching of popular Christian theology attributes the evils which afflict men and other animated beings on this planet to a "fall" of the race

visional explanation.

of man, as such, from its divine ideal—into a mainly animal and sinful condition, caused by the temptation of a supremely wicked person, the Devil, in whom the Evil in the universe is personified. The first man yielded to the Devil; in consequence all men are predisposed to sin and suffer, through inherited opposition to the Divine Ideal. This may satisfy those who do not care to press the question. But it only moves the mystery a step back, while it even aggravates it. It throws no light upon the mixture of evil with good in the universe, even if the facts on which it proceeds are admitted. With this Evil Spirit the occasion of wickedness in man, and sin in consequence involved in the natural history of the human race—the fact of its pre-existence in the wicked Spirit remains unexplained; with the added difficulty of a *natural* transmission of sin, which seems to reduce sin to physical evil; to transform moral or immoral persons into non-moral things; and to destroy personal responsibility. If the Devil is an Eternal Power, co-ordinate with God, we are landed in Manicheism, with its two gods, neither of which can properly be called God—and the issue is an untrustworthy universe. If he is a "fallen" finite person, how entered moral evil into him? The difficulty is aggravated. What is immoral somehow arose in the Devil, and is now naturally transmitted among men, in a universe which is, nevertheless, postulated to be a revelation of Omnipotent Goodness.

Can moral evil be a necessity of finite personality; or of the intractableness of Matter; or may it even be explained away as a mere negation?

These conjectures all fail to justify trust and hope in the Power universally at work in the universe which contains what ought not to exist. There are other conjectures according to which sin is explained away. For they imply that its appearance is *unconditionally necessary* in a world of *finite* persons. Finitude must include imperfection, it is argued. Contrast or antithesis is unavoidably involved in individuality, which must be the product of opposed forces, and character is naturally formed by the struggle of evil with good. Good, it is assumed, can exist only by collision with existing Evil: attraction involves repulsion, and positive involves negative electricity. In infinite unindividual Power alone can perfection be realised, without

the otherwise necessary mixture and antithesis of evil. But unconditional necessity for being bad makes badness in persons no longer immoral. No one can be blamed for what is unconditionally necessary, or feel remorse because it is found in him. Then some of the old philosophers insisted that Matter was the one necessary obstacle to a universe of unmixed good: the universe could not be formed at all, it was assumed, without pre-existing Matter; and the intractable material was supposed to be incapable of reduction to perfect order even by Omnipotence. But if this be so, Evil is no longer what *ought not to be:* Evil *cannot but be.* And this reference of moral Evil to Matter only postpones the difficulty, whilst it lays an unwarrantable burden upon Matter, which is known to us as only a system of sense symbols through which God speaks to us. Matter as known by us is the valued servant and symbol of spirit, in constant correlation with living mind. Again, that Evil is only negation, while nothing real can be negative, is another fancy of some theologians, and in some philosophical theodicies. Nothing that ought not to exist, it is argued, *can* come into *real* existence; what exists can err only by defect of reality. But is not a cruel or a dishonest purpose something that actually exists in the mental experience of the cruel or dishonest man? Nothing seems to be accomplished by this supposed relief, except a change of name.

Moral obligation cannot be resolved into arbitrary will.

That "moral obligation" can be the creation of will, and that Divine will must be good whatever is willed, is the dogma of some theologians. This explains away moral order, and resolves goodness into omnipotence; virtually transforms persons into things; and leads, when intrepidly followed, into final pessimist scepticism.

Either Pessimism or Optimism the ultimate alternatives.

These conjectures, strictly understood, all tend to dissolve the optimist faith that is implied in a religiously conceived world. But what is meant by Optimism? This question will be next considered.

LECTURE II.

THEISTIC OPTIMISM.

Acts that ought not to be acted, found in men.

MORAL evil is not an abstraction. It is actually found in the lives of human persons who occupy this planet. The appearance of Sextus Tarquin, that monster of cruelty, is taken by Leibniz as an example of the lurid facts which threaten to paralyse theistic faith, casting doubt on the moral meaning of the universe. Leibniz tries to explain them in the celebrated optimist theory unfolded in his 'Théodicée.' But Tarquin and Nero and Caligula are not singular among monsters who have appeared in human form, and occupied thrones as well as places from thrones downwards, in the history of mankind to the present hour — the source of told and untold misery in myriads of living beings. For moral evil is found in more than a few persons. Experience of men suggests a mysterious tendency in man to decline from his true ideal; a disposition which seems to work in human beings from the beginning of their personal life; which we are conscious ought to be resisted, and against which the policy of mankind ought to be a constant struggle — sustained in persistent endeavour to recover divine life and rise into the ideal man. Indeed the religious conception of the universe is strangely apt to decay, notwithstanding the hope and courage which its development inspires. The ingenuity of some is exhausted in searching for arguments through which to escape from theistic hope in the Universal Power, and to conclude that conscious life is not worth living; —

so that the supreme end of man should be to get out of consciousness finally; if it is possible for a being who is once conscious to become finally impersonal and unconscious. How and why there should, especially now in Europe, be this pessimist disposition, this preference of the merely physical faith that taken alone is untrustworthy, instead of final faith in the trustworthiness of the Whole, is difficult to understand. The perverted and degrading forms which religion often assumes probably in part account for it in a refined civilisation.

The apparent inconsistency of Evil in the universe, with moral trust in the universal Power.

On the whole, we find that much which ought not to exist, and which need not exist, is found in this corner of the universe;—whatever may be the case in other planets, or at other periods than that section of unbeginning duration which is embraced in our own scanty historic record. The existence of what ought not to exist, in a universe which is tacitly assumed, as a condition of experience, to be self-revelation of Omnipotent Goodness, is the perplexity of persons who desire to retain moral faith in the final outcome of experience as the divine basis of life. The selfishness, injustice, and cruelty found among men; not to speak of the "cruel indifference" of external nature to the happiness of living beings, seems not to consist with the natural evolution being a manifestation of perfectly trustworthy character in the Universal Power. It inclines the sceptic to treat the Whole as non-moral, or fundamentally impersonal. It suggests surrender of the filial trust and hope that the Power to which what is highest in man responds is continually at work, in and around us, in order to assimilate all persons to Himself. A universe in which nothing that ought not to appear *can* ever make its appearance, seems, in our first thought, to be the only possible manifestation of the infinitely good Power presupposed in the religious conception which is the tacit basis of experience. Does not the rise into life of that which conscience obliges man to condemn as absolutely evil involve, either imperfect goodness or deficient power—either way the final untrustworthiness of all that man has to rest on, even for interpreting matter? Does not the existence of vice, and

its continued toleration, on this planet, mean, not infinite goodness, but indifference to goodness on the part of the Omnipotent Power? The supposed divine guarantee for inductive faith in experience, it might be urged, must be a Power that is either not willing to hinder the entrance of what ought not to enter; or not able to do so; or else both willing and able. The last supposition alone, it is taken for granted, corresponds to the idea of omnipotent moral perfection. But that the Power at the root of all is *not* both able and willing to bar the existence of what ought not to exist seems proved, by the fact that moral and physical evil exists, at least in our little planetary home. The sin and the suffering that abounds in human life, and in sentient life here, argues either impotence or imperfection at work in an experience such as this; and it produces paralysis of faith and hope, when this human experience is taken as sufficient proof of indifference and impotence combined in the Universal Power.

The theistic interpretation of the universe is Optimist.

The religious conception of the universe is necessarily optimist, in as far as it implies that the Universal Power is perfectly good. To believe in God is to believe that, whether or not men are as good as they might be, and therefore ought to be, the Divine Idea in the Whole could not be better. To suppose that the natural procedure of the Universal Power is a revelation which contains what is bad, seems to mean, that the universe is *not* the outcome of perfect goodness, but of a Power that is indifferent, or even hostile, to what morally ought to be. This Power, whatever other name might be given to it, could not be called God, when God means infinite goodness personified: only *as such* is God the ground of the absolute trust, that neither our physical nor our moral experience in the cosmos *can* in the end put the persons who have the experience to intellectual or moral confusion. To suppose that the Divine Ideal embodied in the universe could be better than it is, means that evil more or less belongs to that Ideal; that the Universal Power is morally untrustworthy, instead of being the personified moral obligation implied in the primary postulate of life

and experience. Theistic faith expires in the supposition either that God might prefer evil to good, or might be blind indifferent Power. In either case experience—in other words, our whole conscious life—may be finally illusory; our so-called faculties of knowledge may mislead. The revelation that is symbolised in the material world, interpreted through moral experience, *must* therefore admit of being interpreted under some form of optimism—if it is fit to be interpreted religiously; and this whether or not the optimist conception can be fully thought out. But indeed it is not to be expected that it can be so thought out in a human understanding as to leave no remainder of mystery. To think out things and persons *infinitely* is to transcend a finite intelligence of them, and to empty the universe of all that is scientifically imaginable. Only in Omniscience can the universe be infinitely thought out—whatever infinite thought may mean. Yet security in reason for moral trust and hope in the root Power of all is not inconsistent with our imperfection of comprehension;—unless our imperfect intelligence *can see enough* to make it intellectually necessary to surrender trust and hope, and so arrest life in suicidal scepticism.

Can moral evil enter into an optimist universe?

But is this arrest seen to be an inevitable consequence of the facts, that what ought not to exist is found in men, and that pain enters, with a seemingly capricious disregard of desert, into innumerable human and other sentient lives? Can a divine world admit what is morally evil? And even if a temporary rise of evil may be somehow not inconsistent with infinite goodness—inasmuch as virtue, let us suppose, may be educated by the consequent struggle; which may issue, let us also suppose, in the universal extinction of evil,—can persistence, and perhaps endless persistence, in the universe of what is bad be reconciled with ethical obligation divinely personified?

Hypotheses in which either moral trust

I have already suggested the insufficiency of several attempts to explain the fact of Evil found on this planet. Some of them are conjectures formed at the expense of

or moral evil disappear.

the moral perfection of the Universal Power; others explain away moral evil, making it an unconditional necessity of all finite beings; or treating it as an unreal negation, for which no power at all can be presupposed:—not to speak of attempts to hide the difficulty of moral evil in man, by referring it, in an aggravated form too, to the personal agency of a superhuman spirit, or tempter. Manichean dualism; monistic indifference, if not malevolence; an absolute necessity for evil, in a universe which consists of finite, therefore necessarily imperfect, beings; necessity for evil caused by intractable Matter;—these are all speculations which either destroy moral faith in the Universal Power, or take away the difference between what *is* and what *ought* to be. They leave us in a universe that reveals persistent collision between two rival Powers of good and evil; or that reveals a Universal Power indifferent to good, even intending evil; or finally a universe that consists of non-moral things only, to the exclusion of persons—good or bad.

An unwarranted assumption.

The question why God admits into the universe what is bad, seems to involve an unproved assumption. It assumes that *divinely necessitated* absence of evil must be in itself alone good, so that only impossibility of evil ever making its appearance is consistent with Omnipotent Goodness. What ought not to exist, it is assumed, cannot coexist with God. But has this dogma ever been proved? Can it be shown that the difficulty of subsuming a *mixed* universe under the religious or optimist conception is as great as that involved in totally agnostic pessimism—with the arrest which this puts upon *all* interpretations of experience, including even those on which life itself depends, so that suicide is its logical issue? Cosmical trust in experience is inconsistent with a radically untrustworthy universe.

Must a divinely conceived universe be a universe only of non-moral things; or

Perhaps it may turn out after all that the root-question here is—Whether it is morally necessary that the universe in which the Supreme Power is revealed should be a universe *only of things*, to the exclusion of individual *persons*, who, as moral agents, must be *able to make themselves bad?* May the perfect ideal include the existence of *persons*—

with the implied possibility of their making themselves bad, and keeping themselves bad — which last means making themselves gradually worse? Now, a material world, or universe of things in moral correlation with persons—things which exist as a means for intercommunication of persons, and for their intellectual and spiritual education—seems to be the sort of universe we find ourselves in, if we may judge by the appearance it presents in this little corner. The moral education of man looks like a chief end of matter—when matter is regarded, I mean, at the highest *human* point of view; for I am far from supposing that the universe is only this, or not much more than this; or that if man could become divinely omniscient the whole difficulty might not disappear, in the full light of perfect reason. But, as the case is, man can interpret the universe only under human conditions. A *homo mensura* interpretation, or a *Divina mensura* humanised, gives him the humanly related universe, which is really all that he has to do with. And this *human* meaning may be even eternally true under the human relations: at any rate, it is enough for our spiritual as well as physical life.

may it not also include finite persons, who, as persons, must have absolute power to make themselves bad?

May it not be that the perfect ideal, or what ought to exist according to the infinitely good system of the universe, includes the *possibility* of the entrance into existence, and the continuance, of states of human beings which ought not to exist; but which do not exist by an absolute necessity, only in and through the will of personal agents? As moral agents, persons must be free to originate voluntary acts that are bad or undivine, as well as voluntary acts in harmony with the divine order—acts of which they must themselves be the originating causes, if *they* may be held morally responsible for the acts. Now have we sufficient reason to take for granted that a universe in which infinitely good Power is revealed *must* be a universe that consists only of naturally necessitated, and therefore non-moral, things? May it not contain responsibly acting persons; and even find its larger issues in their education and moral trial? Does not *necessitated* absence of sin and sorrow mean non-existence of persons, and existence of

Can "persons," free, in virtue of their moral personality to resist, as well as to assimilate, divine life, exist, in a theistically interpretable universe?

unconscious things only; or at most of conscious automatons—not properly persons? And is *this* necessarily the highest ideal of the universe that man even can form? On the contrary, is not a world that includes persons *better* than a wholly non-moral world, from which persons are excluded—say on account of the risk of the entrance into existence of what ought not to exist, through the personal power to act ill implied in morally responsible individual agency? If so, may not *acts which ought not to exist* enter into existence, through the agency of persons, even under the perfect or divine ideal of the Whole? Persons, or dependent beings who can originate voluntary acts that ought not to be acted, need not be excluded, if God can admit and sustain persons, consistently with perfect Goodness. God *cannot* make actual what involves express contradiction—namely, the existence of a person who is not a person; for individual personality involves responsible freedom to act ill. If this seems to limit omnipotence, or make God finite, the alternative supposition—that the existence of beings who are morally responsible for their acts is impossible for God in a perfectly constituted universe, is surely not less a limitation of omnipotence. It is a limitation, too, that is imposed only on the ground of a residuum of incomplete or mysterious conception implied in the idea of individual or finite personality; whilst the obstacle to a being existing, who is at once a responsible person, and yet unable to act freely, lies not in its mere mysteriousness, but in its evident absurdity.

A contradictory ideal, at once including and excluding individual persons, cannot be the Divine or Perfect ideal.

For is not a contradiction presented in the supposition of *free* individual agents who are *not free* to do what *ought not* to be done? The assertion that the infinite perfection of God necessitates the persistent goodness of all beings living in the divine universe, is to assert that irrationality rather than reason is at the root of all. It is no abatement of omnipotence that an express contradiction cannot be realised by Omnipotence. A contradiction in terms is irrational: to say that, if God is perfect, free agents *cannot* produce volitions that they ought not to produce, and that contradict moral reason

— which is another expression for divine will — this is not to vindicate divine perfection, but to destroy it. It is to say that only things, not individual persons, *can* exist in a divine universe. Omnipotence cannot be power to realise contradictions. God cannot sin; cannot make a person or free agent at once exist and not exist; cannot make 2 and 2 equal to 5; cannot make a circle have all the properties of a square while it remains a circle; cannot make a once actual past never actual. If we may put faith in the reason in which we share, *these* are not possible issues of omnipotence; inability to realise them does not limit it; assertion of their possibility has no meaning.

There cannot be an individual person who is *not* an individual person.

In those examples the contradiction is glaring. There are other contradictions in which the absurdity is not less, but only less obvious. Inability in morally responsible individual persons to make themselves bad may be one such. Is not a person who is morally responsible, yet incapable of evil volition, a contradictory idea? If free to act, he must be able to originate evil acts. To refer the acts to Divine Will, instead of to the finite person, would transfer responsibility from the individual person to God, and reduce man from a moral agent to a conscious automaton.

The moral freedom of acts lies in their origin, not in their natural issues.

Further. The essence of man's moral responsibility lies in the origin, not in the physical consequences, of his personal acts. The external consequences of a good or evil act of human will are determined under law of nature — that is to say, by the Divine Power that is operative throughout all natural order; but the voluntary determination itself—so far as it is bad, and so far as there is *individual* responsibility for its badness—cannot be physically determined by God, under natural, which is really divine, procedure. For is it not in the personal centre to which the act has to be referred, as its primary or responsible source, and not in what follows the act in nature, under natural law, that moral evil lies? Accordingly, it is the origin of the evil volition, not its consequences as a natural antecedent of change in the surrounding world, after it has been originated, that is

relevant. A person whose immoral volitions could not, according to the divine laws of nature, be followed by the changes which he intended, would still remain responsible for the deliberate intention; but plainly not for physically impossible consequences, these being divinely determined according to the mechanism of nature, and so withdrawn from man's personal power, and therefore from his personal responsibility. His responsibility for badness is measured by his power to make what is bad. The accountability of a person presupposes this quasi-supernatural character in acts for which he is accountable: *he* cannot be the real agent of an act which has not originated in himself, but which must be referred to the ordered course of Nature, as an effect then, not of his imperfectly reasonable will, but of Active Reason in God. Thus the real question about the existence of wicked acts, and who is responsible for them, turns upon the previous question—Whether the human person is the power to whom the act is finally referable; or whether acts apparently his are in reality only natural effects of caused causes, and finally of the Universal Power? Does "I ought" mean that *I can*, or only that *Nature—i.e., God—can?* It is impossible for fallible men to perceive in each case with infallible certainty the line which separates overt acts for which an individual person is responsible, and events which should be referred to the divine mechanism of nature. We often cannot know whether the overt action is the man's own action, for which he alone can be blamed; or how far it is due to the mechanism of nature or of society for which he is not responsible. But moral responsibility is measured by personal power to do or not do that for which there is moral responsibility. A person is morally responsible only for self-originated volition, and for external changes which he foresees that the volition will be naturally followed by, according to the order of nature.

Persons as related to natural causation.

Personal origination of acts, in moral freedom from the Power that operates in all natural uniformities, I assume to be the fundamental postulate of individual responsibility.

So that a wholly physical science of man, which concerns itself only with the natural laws of which the human body is the theatre, overlooks that by which man is distinguished as a rational spirit—that which makes him a symbol of the infinitely good Power, or constant Agent in the physical universe. So far as a person is really a person — so far as there *are* events for which *he alone* is morally responsible—he is in a manner extricated from the mechanism of natural causation; because he is included in that higher economy to which the natural mechanism is in harmonious subordination, and for the sake of which it appears to exist.

Individual moral personality implies that individual persons may make themselves bad.

Another agency than the human operates in and through our intellectual and emotional consciousness; but the power to originate deliberate volitions for which he is responsible *must* be the person's own who is responsible for them: he cannot be only their natural cause; nor can they be naturally caused, which is in the end to be divinely caused: they must originate in the individual, if he is responsible for them. An agent cannot be personally responsible without originative individual power. One may, under the ideal of natural necessity, suppose a universe in which All is nature, although it may by a fiction be called divine nature; and this supposed universe may seem more worthy than the actual universe, with its sins and sorrows on this planet. But it would be a universe free from the risk of wicked persons on moral trial, only on condition that it must also be empty of good persons on moral trial. To relieve the universe of all risk of anything existing in it which ought not to exist, persons on moral trial must be reduced to non-moral things. Morally accountable agents must be excluded. To argue that the ideal of the universe cannot be perfect, and that the Universal Power cannot be ever-active and infinitely good, if moral evil, with naturally consequent suffering, is found anywhere in it, implies, does it not, that "God" cannot be God, if we find a planet containing personal agents on moral trial? A circle destitute of the essential properties of a circle could as well be supposed to exist, as a finite person

on moral trial, who is wanting in what is essential to a person on moral trial.

The real question is, Whether the existence of individual persons is consistent with theistic optimism?

So the real question seems to be a previous question—Whether the existence of *individual persons* is consistent with an optimist conception of the universe? May dependent beings righteously exist, who can put and keep themselves below their ideal; and if some of *them* do so, why are not such agents for ever withdrawn, so that moral evil may at least not be an endless element in existence? "Offences must needs come"—*if persons exist;* but the "woe" is to the persons by whom they come. Indeed, persons may seem to involve risk of evil as long as they exist. It does not appear that even omnipotence *can* exclude what ought not to exist, while there are beings whose essential characteristic is, that they are able to bring this into existence; and who cannot lose power of resisting the divine order, and of excluding divine life from their lives, without losing their moral personality and becoming only non-moral things.

Is a universe which contains persons—who, being persons, must be free to make themselves bad—necessarily an untrustworthy and hopeless universe?

Is man able to show that only a world *empty of persons* can be a divine world—that the divine world must be a world consisting only of *things*—including conscious things or automatons, but without moral personality? Would it enhance the perfection of God in Nature that nothing in the form of good and evil human agency should appear involved in the course of nature—that evil should be excluded, by goodness in the form of morally tried personal life being also excluded? Is it only on those terms that man can consent to regard the universe religiously, as the revelation of trustworthy Power vitalising a perfect moral ideal? Are we obliged to say, that the presence of a single evil, even under this condition, is necessarily inconsistent with a religious conception of the Whole, and therefore with presupposed perfect goodness of the Universal Power. A divinely necessitated goodness in all persons, which destroys responsibility, and therefore the goodness itself, is self-contradictory. A responsible agent must be intrusted with power to disturb the assumption, that all persons in a divine universe must be always good.

The optimism of Leibniz.

According to the form of optimist conception that was proposed by Leibniz, evil belongs, not to the actualities of the universe, which are all determined by divine Will, but to eternally necessary Ideals, to one or other of which any actual universe *must* conform—these ideals being independent of even divine omnipotent Will. They are like abstract mathematical necessities, which God cannot reverse, because they are Universal Reason. And if evil is necessarily involved in the best possible Ideal, then either no world at all can make its appearance, or it *must* be one in which wicked persons and suffering animals are found. The world as we have it is good, notwithstanding the seeming monsters that appear in it. For their so-called crimes are the means of more than equivalent good. The wicked tyrant Tarquin is figured by Leibniz under Ideals other than those in which he *must* be in *this* universe—good and happy in each of these, but in each case in a universe that is—in consequence of *his* goodness—on the whole inferior to the universe in which the Tarquin of history spread disorder and misery around him.

"A good Tarquin would have necessitated a worse universe than that in which the wicked Tarquin appears."

Had Jupiter made Tarquin happy at Corinth, or a good and prosperous king in Thrace, instead of a cruel tyrant at Rome, the world in which he was found could no longer be *this* world; and must have been a world less good on the whole than the one in which Sextus appeared. So that Jupiter could not but choose this universe, even with its tyrant; because *its* ideal surpasses in perfection the ideals of all other possible universes. Otherwise Jupiter would have renounced his wisdom, and preferred the worse. "You see, then," Minerva explains, "that my father has not made Tarquin wicked: he was so from all eternity—in the best of ideals. Jupiter has done nothing but award him actual existence; which supreme wisdom could not refuse to that ideal universe in which this criminal is necessarily contained; Jupiter has only made him actual, instead of ideal;—under the one perfect ideal from which a "wicked" Tarquin could not be excluded, because his exclusion would make it an impossible ideal. So his crimes are even now seen to be the source of good issues. They made Rome free, and

then Rome became a great empire, with illustrious examples of manliness; though all this is as nothing to the final issues of that eternal ideal in which wicked Tarquin and the glorious Roman Empire are found, as hereafter to be realised in admiring thought, when, after a passage from this mortal state to a better, the gods shall have made us able to conceive the Whole.

The argument of Leibniz.

An objection to the religious meaning of the universe which underlies this allegory of Leibniz might be suggested. Can a Power which sustains a universe that contains evil, when either the evil might have been left out, or the universe not have come into existence, be said to do what is perfectly good? God makes a world in which there is evil—which could not have been made without evil in it, but which need not have been made at all. The inference seems to be that the power to which this mixed world is all referred has not done what ought to be done. Leibniz rejects the assumption that a universe in which there is evil may not be the best world; for it may be that the evil is the natural parent of the good. An imperfection in part may be needed for the perfection of the Whole. A general will prefer a great victory with a wound to loss of the battle without the wound. Sin may introduce into the universe something better than what could have been brought into existence but for sin. In that case, a world with sin in it is concluded to be better than a world without sin. But Leibniz fails to show *how* the supposed best ideal makes the evil found in the world inevitable, or *how* a world in which nothing could exist that ought not to exist might not be.

The insufficiency of his optimism.

This form of theistic optimism seems to make moral evil not something which there is an unconditional obligation to condemn, but rather what must be admitted as in itself good, on account of its consequences. It also seems to imply an inadequate conception of the originating power of *persons*, in virtue of their individual responsibility, to bring into existence what ought not to exist, and is not brought into existence by divine necessity. If moral personality is originative — to the

extent of the acts for which the person is accountable, then — as I have been arguing — the question resolves into the consistency of the existence of persons, able themselves to make themselves bad, with moral perfection in the Universal Power. Can beings exist, under a religious conception of the universe, who are *able to resist* moral reason, or the will of God that all persons should be good.

It seems to make moral evil absolutely good.

That the glories of Rome should make the crimes of Sextus only relatively crimes, but absolutely good, by a necessity which omnipotence is unable to overcome, is an unsatisfying idea. It seems to relieve the difficulty by explaining away moral evil, or by transforming it, at a higher point of view, into good; so that the worst crimes are relatively bad, but really good. It seems to imply that Sextus could not help being bad, or rather that what *we* regard as a bad Sextus was *really* a good Sextus, when looked at in all his consequences to the universe. He is what he is by a necessity of existence, not by a personal act of his own that is independent of ideal necessities; and he might, *but for himself alone*, have been other than he actually was. This is to make Sextus unfortunate, not blameworthy. For moral evil is what ought not to exist—that for which there is no absolute necessity. Sin is the unique effect of the person whose voluntary act it is. Can the universe not be finally divine, even if it contains persons who are able to make and keep themselves *undivine?*

The optimist conception of existence, which is the alternative to that of life in a finally untrustworthy universe, possible notwithstanding its remainder of mystery.

But, after all, this moral trial of persons without their own leave; their finite weakness and ignorance, on account of individual perception being necessarily only perception in part; and the distributed miseries of men and other sentient beings irregularly,—form a strange and unexpected sort of revelation of morally trustworthy Universal Power. The persistency and extent of the lurid facts are still insufficiently explained, by the reference of acts that ought not to be acted to the originative agency of persons. Under this condition, one might have expected to find some persons resisting, others perfectly conformed to, the ideal of moral reason. The morally downward tendency

which all men have to resist, suggests a remainder of mystery in personality which perhaps man is not able to remove: no individual person is wholly individual. But incomplete knowledge, as distinguished from absolute contradiction, leaves room for the optimist conception that is presupposed in a religiously conceived universe, finally trustworthy,—therefore for life inspired by hope. Pessimist doubt—which is suicidal—for extinction of conscious life would be the only escape from an experience that *may* in the end deceive, and issue for all in an outcome of woe —this doubt is imposed, not by incomplete knowledge, with its remainder of mystery, but only by a complete perception that the universe as we find it *must* contradict perfect goodness. When the necessary alternatives are *theistic optimism* and *atheistic pessimism*, I fail to find in reason a necessity for the suicidal alternative; and I find the opposite alternative supported by all that is highest in man. This is not demonstration like pure mathematics. But is it not enough to satisfy him who seeks to become what he ought to be?

LECTURE III.

HUMAN PROGRESS.

Sceptical pessimism the alternative to the religious or optimist conception of the universe.

THE *reductio ad absurdum* of total doubt or nescience, implied in a finally undivine, and therefore untrustworthy, universe, is the philosophical vindication of its religious or optimist interpretation. The sceptical alternative is disposed of by the impossibility of interpreting experience, even physically, without final moral faith, consciously or unconsciously, in operation. This seems sufficient; unless it can be demonstrated that the mixture of evil—intellectual, physical, and moral—with what is good *must contradict* the idea of morally perfect Omnipotence being at the root of all. But a demonstration of the inconsistency would be literally suicidal. If the sin and suffering found in this corner of the universe cannot be *somehow* consistent with the perfect goodness of the Universal Power, and so with ultimate optimism, the universe must either be meaningless, or charged with evil meaning: trust and hope must be withdrawn, and all intercourse with ourselves and our surroundings is paralysed. Life, in the darkness of this discovery, would not be worth living, even if it were possible to live in the chaos. The chief end for the individual, if one could then be supposed to have a chief end, would be, to get out of conscious life for ever—on the supposition that it is possible to get out of it, after a person is once in it—to get out of it in a sort of *Nirvana*, by subsiding into the universal unconsciousness. This would justify the paradox of those who identify all consciousness with imperfection and change, and who find

their ideal of Deity in the want of it;—refusing to recognise in conscious life the presupposition of all real existence—in highest perfection in God, shared only in part in human beings.

Moral evil cannot be an impossibility, if the world may reasonably contain individual persons on moral trial.

When I speak of the opposite conception to all this as optimism, I must explain what I mean. Theistic optimism does not mean that the universe contains nothing that ought not to exist; it refers any moral evil that does appear —while it ought not, and need not—to the originating will of persons who enter into nature, with power to make themselves bad. The rise of evil is contingent upon the universe being a universe that includes persons, not things only; a universe, too, which, at our human point of view, seems to evolve in order to be a school for the progress and moral trial of persons. This involves moral or spiritual relations among persons, presupposed in moral personality, as well as physical relations among things; and it obliges us to look at natural causes in a higher light than physical science does. Above all, it implies that human persons, finite individuals, may *make themselves bad.* If the religious or optimist conception of the universe includes persons—superior to things and *their* relations—then the entrance of what ought not to exist seems an *inevitable contingency.* Exclusion of the *possibility* of evil, or immoral resistance to the divine ideal—the resistance leading to suppression of the higher life in the resisting persons —seems to contradict the idea of moral personality, education, and trial. A world of finite persons must be *capable of being made bad, by the persons of whom it consists.* The entrance into their lives of volitions which they ought not to have willed is not "permission" of what might have been prevented, by the Universal Power making and keeping all persons perfectly good. To keep persons perfectly good, by an irresistible necessity, would be to transform a spiritual world of persons into a physical or non-moral world of conscious automatons: the so-called persons would cease to be morally personal; their moral trial would be an illusion.

Non-moral things must

Persons are more emphatically real than material things, if things are only passive or impotent. But the real

existence of material things and of individual persons,—two postulated existences in the three-fold articulation of realities,—must mean that neither things nor persons are only illusory modes of God, the third postulated reality. And material things must at least have outward reality enough to be available media of intercommunication between conscious persons: they must afford an interpretable system of outward signs, charged with meanings which science may interpret: they must be able to convey meaning out of one mind, more or less adequately, into another mind. We practically find at least this amount and kind of reality implied in the material world.

be treated as real, although they are only passive signs.

But although material things are—in some imperfectly comprehended way—more and other than private phenomena of my individual consciousness, I have no reason to suppose that things, like persons, are authors of acts; which would imply that they can originate effects. With less or more intelligence, we actually distinguish *things* from *self;* and both from *God,* the sustaining power in things and in persons; we distinguish *ourselves* from *things,* especially in virtue of our being endowed with personality, which, as far as the responsible activity extends, enables each person to make himself bad. And this agency of persons cannot, I think, be *shown* to be inconsistent with the causal concatenation of physical nature, of which indeed the person needs to avail himself in all overt free action. Individual persons are the only originating powers in existence known to man, over and above the Universal Power. Why should this resisting power of persons, through which they may refuse to assimilate the divine life, necessarily contradict the finally optimist or religious conception of the universe? This would imply that an individual person could not exist in a divinely maintained and ordered world; and that the Universal Power could be revealed only in and through the divine agency, manifested in unconscious things, or in conscious automatons, neither good nor bad morally.

The only known power, outside the Divine Power which pervades Nature, is the power attributed by moral reason to individual persons.

But one may still ask how a universe that contains within it this possibly disturbing element of individual personal agency can be kept by God in harmony with its

But what if all persons were to

maintain themselves in permanent resistance to their divine ideal?

Divine ideal? If a universe which delegates individual power to persons, to make and keep themselves in states in which they ought not to exist, is a universe that God can manifest Himself in—is it not a universe that may finally be converted into moral chaos by the persons in it—even while it might continue a physical cosmos; so that abatement of evil on this planet would be impossible? More than this, may not persons, with their implied power of initiating evil, gradually make the world of persons a world in which *all* persons make themselves wholly and finally bad? May not their moral trial lead to universal and unending moral disorder; so that ethical religion would in fact be extinguished by the moral personality on which I have argued that it rests? The existence of persons who, as persons, are free to become permanently bad; who cannot by any power, divine or other, be hindered from becoming bad, without being reduced to irresponsible things,—seems to imply the *possibility* of a world in which all persons are at last irrecoverably bad, and becoming worse. What then becomes of the optimist conception of existence? Theistic faith would turn out to be a fallacious guarantee for the moral cosmos which it presupposes as the final outcome. The universe of persons would then have become a universe of devils—surely not a possible manifestation of the morally perfect Omnipotence that is inevitably assumed in all our intercourse with our unconscious and conscious surroundings.

Why is there a universe or temporal evolution?

Thus the existence of persons, whose personality enables them to make and keep themselves bad, is the Great Enigma of faith, and is at least evidence of the *scientific* limitation of *our* final conception. To resolve the enigma we should need to know why the religiously trusted universe of things and persons exists at all, why it has existed, and why it will continue to exist—if, indeed, to put the problem thus in terms of time does not take in what is irrelevant at the final point of view. The reason for God, and for the universe of things and persons in which He is continuously revealing Himself, *must be* the insoluble problem; yet without solving *it* we cannot be sure that our knowledge is complete enough to show that

a planet like this, occupied by persons who can make themselves bad, is necessarily inconsistent with the ideally perfect universe. We must first ourselves conceive the divine ideal. But this is not possible; nor is it needed for human purposes, if man finds that he *must* maintain filial trust, and the hope that all will be finally well with those persons who withdraw personal resistance, and permit the divine ideal to be gradually realised in themselves by God.

History suggests that the persons on this planet may be involved in a progressive struggle towards the ideal of Man.

An experience of persons that like man's is limited to the human persons found on this planet—in ignorance of innumerable other orders of moral agents, bodied or unbodied, that may exist elsewhere or nowhere—and connected, it may be, in unknown relations to men; all persons in the universe being perhaps somehow related to all others, as all things are physically related to all others in external nature,—this infinitely limited experience of persons, combined with final faith in the righteous love of the Universal Power, form *man's* available resources for determining what the meaning and issue of the Whole may be, so far as man is personally related to it. Now, when we contemplate moral and sentient beings on this little world of ours, do we find that the persons who appear and disappear in successive generations are becoming morally better or worse,—according to our highest moral ideal? and do we find that their material and social environment is, through their own endeavours or otherwise, in progress towards what is better, or in regress towards what is worse? Does the spectacle suggest gradual approximation towards what is ideally good, or is the movement in the opposite direction? Is it a struggle of evil indeed with good—involving, as we might say, enormous waste of sentient lives, and much torture of sensibilities,—but withal a residuum of gradually victorious endeavour? *Struggle with evil*—yet somehow on the way to infinite good and righteous issues, may be the form which the optimist or religious conception of life is found to assume, when we look at human history and experience.

But progressive improvement, in an imperfect world does not, if it mitigates, fully explain present and previous evil.

But even progressive abatement of the evil that is now mixed with the good, in persons and their social economy on this planet, seems by itself inadequate to reconcile with perfect filial trust those strange appearances which suggest sceptical pessimism. In the first place, it does not explain how, under Omnipotent Goodness, there can be *need* for progressive improvement—why the world should require to be improved, instead of being perfect from the first. For progress presupposes previous evil; in all development the antecedent state is inferior to the consequent state. The evil, which called for the progressive correction, has still to be explained. Why was the world ever in a state which required progressive improvement? More than this, if a person's departure from the divine ideal of humanity is the act of the person himself —if he is found willing what he ought not to will, and what he need not have willed—this means more than physical imperfection, which may be improved by physical evolution: it implies not merely relative imperfection, which may gradually disappear: this is absolute evil. It involves evil that is blameworthy, and that is not removed by improvement of surroundings, or by expanding personal intelligence.

Undemonstrated progress is unfit to sustain absolute faith.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, faith in a gradual abatement of evil, by the method of progressive evolution, is now a favourite scientific faith: this faith may even be regarded as the form which an unconsciously religious conception of the universe is assuming in professedly agnostic minds. For faith in human progress *is* of the nature of religious trust—scientifically verified by a narrow and uncertain experience. It is taken for granted that the facts must signify progressive improvement on the whole, and also that progress may be expected to persist in an indefinite future. That the progressive evolution is to be endless, or, if not endless, that it is in some future to reach perfection, and then persist in perfection, must be reached in moral faith. Indeed we are invited by some expositors of progressive evolution to anticipate in the far future regress instead of perfection — even final destruction of all the products of progress in man-

kind,—disintegration of the planet itself, with consequent disappearance of all living actors in the meaningless drama that was once acted on the earth, of which, with the final extinction of the planet, all conceivable record must be for ever lost. The universe will then become what it would have been, if men and the other living beings on this earth had never been evolved.

Inconsistency of un-theistic faith in progress.

Yet some who profess to reject the religious conception of the universe seem notwithstanding to find a sort of theistic satisfaction in an attenuated empirical faith in human advancement. They meet the final difficulties of thought by repeating the words "progress," "development," "evolution"—which in strictness only suggest the mode in which the universe, so far as it is physically constituted, seems in the meantime to be behaving itself; or in which it has been behaving itself, as far as men can see back into the past; and in which without warrant it is expected to behave through an indefinite future—this, too, notwithstanding an agnostic withdrawal of theistic faith, or reasonable assurance of the final trustworthiness of the evolution. Speculative *justification* of *expectant* trust is supposed to consist in "verifications," offered by physical phenomena that have been emptied of moral reason, and which *may* therefore be the sport of malign, or indifferent, or irrational Universal Power. For nothing deeper is recognised, by those who accept only this attenuated religious confidence in the improving tendency of man; and who indulge in it, seemingly unconscious that even this, so far as it goes, contradicts their agnostic renunciation of final moral faith.

The sort of religion which worships the Universe, as progressive, after it has withdrawn all moral or theistic trust.

The conception of man as at present in physical progress towards a happy millennium may, however, be a mitigation of the enigma of the bad found mixed so far with the good, in a world still treated as interpretable, and therefore so far trustworthy. It has been called "meliorism." Inadequate as a foundation for theistic faith in the natural evolution, or as an explanation of the mixture of evil, the idea of gradual, even if often interrupted, individual and social amelioration is nevertheless full of human interest, and is illus-

trated by many facts. Indulgence in the idea is natural to goodness and nobility of character. It gives life to generous hope, and helps to correct selfish individualism, by educating that larger individualism which finds the true ideal of a person in unselfish relations to other persons, and devotion to the personified Omnipotent Goodness. If those now living are not themselves actually to see the best issues, there is still consolatory faith in the millennial comfort and satisfaction of later generations. And all this because a tendency towards a higher ideal seems now visible; and the tendency is trusted in, like other natural laws, even when the trust is not consciously religious. Present ills, it seems, may well be endured by this generation, as greater ills were endured by past ones, on account of the potential promise of good in store for our successors;—this partly because we find the existing generation sharing in the advancement, and also because the idea makes us happy in thinking that we can contribute to its fuller attainment by our successors. Social activity, sustained by this sort of faith in the Universal Power, seems to shed light in the darkness, for a generation unusually perplexed by pessimist despair. This imperfect form of moral hope in the Power at the heart of the universe may be more sincere and productive of good, in some who profess agnostic inability, than in the conventional religion into which scientific agnosticism has introduced a needed disturbance.

The New and the Old, as alternatively ideals.

"Human progress" is, at any rate, a favourite watchword in the nineteenth century. It is the expression of a conception in which we are educated, partly by the rapid increase of man's power to adapt natural causes to human purposes, obviously rendering this planet more fit to be lived in comfortably. It has not been always so; nor is it so now in all minds. The ideal of progress lies in the future: some men and perhaps some generations have found *their* ideal in the past, or in the future only so far as it is like the past. There are always those given to excessive admiration of antiquity, and those who indulge an excessive appetite for what is new. Few, as Bacon remarks, are so happily tempered that they can hold the

mean, neither rejecting what has been well laid down by the ancients, nor despising what is well introduced by modern thought. Affectation of antiquity only, or of novelty only, he regards as humours of partisans rather than sane judgments of mankind. We ought to seek for our ideal, not in the state of any age, past or future, which is unstable, but in the steady light of reasoned experience.

Real progress unites past experience with ideal anticipation.

The divine method of human progress, as revealed in facts, seems to involve a composition between two opposite tendencies. Intended progress that would wholly sever itself from the past illustrates, in consequent regress, the irrationality of the procedure. An ideal, on the contrary, that is found wholly in the past, and that induces desire only to preserve what has been, arrests change; yet change is essential to vigorous life. True progress, based on the Universal Reason that is latent at once in the mind of man and in his surrounding universe, cannot lose continuity with the share of this reason that has become conscious in man. In all advance, what is new arises out of what is old, in the way of metamorphosis, not isolation from and rejection of the old. As Bacon says of progress in human science, some who handle knowledge take pleasure only in trying experiments empirically, while others would make inherited dogmas supersede experiments. The former are like the ant; they collect without constructing. The others are like the spider; they make intellectual cobwebs out of their present possessions. The bee rightly takes the middle course: it gathers its material from the flowers of the garden and the field, but it transforms them by a power of its own. The composition which unites the past and the future, seems to be a necessary factor in the advancement of man, who is intermediate between mere animal and Deity, between nescience and omniscience,—whose progress must be away from the former towards the latter of these extremes, a gradual awakening in his personal consciousness of the divine life and reason of which the universe is a symbol or revelation.

Progress through

The conception of the progressive evolution of mankind must be further modified by the consideration that the

Regress; also Progress through Persons.

Past presents persons whose intellectual or spiritual development seems in advance of all present, perhaps of all future, examples. Persons are important factors of human progress, and the laws which determine the appearance and education of epoch-making men are obscure. Who, in succeeding generations, has surpassed Aristotle in comprehensive intelligence? Socrates and the Hebrew prophets were followed by ages of comparative moral and spiritual darkness. Saints and martyrs have shown a self-sacrifice foreign to the experience and sympathies of selfish and faithless successors. Things and persons are so commingled in the stream of time that the onward current is often disturbed and deflected. The action of exceptional persons—men of genius for good or evil—seems to interfere with a physical order which faith might expect to find continuously progressive. That mankind should be only in progress, not actually perfect from the first, may be implied in the idea of moral personality. A world of persons could not be a world of always perfect persons. Providential progress, not perfection from the beginning, appears as the condition suited to moral agents, distinguished from natural things. And the improvement of mankind, as I think Wordsworth somewhere suggests, is not like a Roman road which goes straight to its goal; it is rather like a winding river, frequently forced to turn backward in order to overcome obstacles which cannot be directly eluded, but moving—in consequence of the deflection—with additional forward impulse.

Pain and Progress, as means and end.

Physical and intellectual evil—pain as well as ignorance and error — seem to be means of advancement towards the imperfectly comprehensible end to which the universe is moving. It is commonplace to suggest that the pain which is implied in dissatisfaction is an indispensable motor force, at the root of advancement in human society. Sympathy with suffering is needed for education in goodness. Reason is brought out of the dormant state into the conscious state in man, by the discomfort of its being still partly dormant. The uneasiness of ignorance and error is the motive to discovery. That we are out of harmony with our divine ideal makes us

unsatisfied: this evokes innate divine reason. The educating influence of pain may be resisted, if a person wills to persist in a state in which he ought not to exist. But its divine influence is in innumerable ways on the side of what ought to be, and what might be but for evil in the person who resists that educating pressure of nature, which is really divine power.

Intellectual progress, as illustrated in the history of philosophy and theology.

We have some illustration of progress through apparent regress, in the past history of philosophy and theology. Systems seem to the superficial student to succeed one another in an aimless series, without permanent advance. The slow and often interrupted education of human intelligence, and the natural adaptation of each system to the age in which it evolved, is apt to be overlooked, as the divine condition of increasing insight. Yet throughout the intellectual sects and systems of the past an unceasing if unconscious "purpose" has been running, so that the thoughts of men have gradually "widened with the process of the suns." The history of human thought appears as progressive development — often interrupted in regress—the issue of a composition of forces, each inadequate, and therefore while in vogue a source of dissatisfaction, the discontent an impulse towards wider and deeper conceptions.

The mean between extremes, and composition of intellectual forces as laws of Progress.

Has not the apparently confused philosophic past been really a struggle, in which forms of idealistic construction, wherein the secret of the universe is supposed to be evolved out of a single principle, are arrayed against different phases of sceptical pessimism, with consequent despair of any reason being latent in the universal movement? Yet is not the gradual outcome of this continuous struggle—idealisms opposed and slowly corrected by sceptical criticism—a nearer approach to the philosophy which acknowledges as its consummation, with increasing intelligence, the moral faith and religious conceptions that are intermediate between the paralysis of Nescience, and the Divine Thought or Omniscence, which in its infinity evades the philosophic grasp of man? The practical impossibility of permanently subsiding into the total doubt

which abandons life as uninterpretable, either as a whole or in any of its parts; together with the repeated failure of attempts to comprehend the Whole—lead the philosopher into the intermediate path of trust in the religious conception of the Whole, as the alternative for man. Here, nevertheless, his intellectual activity needs to be quickened from time to time, by controversy between Omniscient Idealism and Sceptical Empiricism. With an *irrefutable* faith in the reasonableness of the Whole, he lives assured that nothing can put either scientific or moral intelligence to permanent confusion, and so make the fundamental faith of reason untenable. To follow this path—intermediate between Nescience and Omniscience—is to acknowledge men as more than animals, yet less than God; through their organisms part of Nature, while in their spiritual experience they in degrees participate in Divine life and reason. A philosophy which looks only to man's visible organic connection with nature is logically atheistic and totally agnostic. The intermediate is stamped upon all our experience. We are alike unable to know all and to remain ignorant of all. Yet, unless we know *all*, it may seem that we cannot know *any;* since each finite thing and individual person is connected with every other, and is explained only when seen in rational correlation with every other. But in humanly progressive philosophy and theology many things must in the end be "left abrupt."

Is not theistic faith, so far as it is strong and intelligent, the fundamental factor in human progress?

That the progressive improvement of man involves gradual extinction of the religious conception of the universe, and that the final victory of the gradual natural evolution will consist in the disappearance of this conception, is the incoherent philosophy which Auguste Comte helped to diffuse in Europe and America in the passing generation. Religion (in an unreasonable form) is assumed to be an anachronism, which the human race, in civilised countries, has already nearly outgrown, so that everywhere it is found in a slow decay;—maintaining a languid life among persons of imperfect intelligence, but so inconsistent with social advancement

that, in prosperous countries, it exists now as a comparatively harmless superstition, no longer a real and persecuting power. We are supposed to have arrived at a stage in which educated persons see that the universe, including man, is simply a succession of passing appearances, which can be interpreted only physically, according to their apparent coexisting relations and sequences. But is there not a theistic faith, undeveloped and unconscious, at the root even of this thin and shallow interpretation?

Comte's three stages of progressive evolution, in which a superstitious theistic faith is supposed to be gradually making way for an exclusively physical faith.

Beneficial consequences of physically scientific applications of what is really theistic faith in the physical meaning of the world, are contrasted by Comte with the effects of crude religious ideas, under which superstition ascribes events to the irrational caprice of spirits; signalises only uncommon events as supernatural; and finds in the sufferings of man only the cruel anger of gods. At a later stage in history, Comte finds these childish mythologies giving place to empty abstractions of metaphysical thought,—words, void of any meaning that could be verified in sensuous experience, made to do duty instead of the declining mythologies, and to conceal man's inevitable ignorance of all beyond the finite phenomena which somehow succeed one another on the stream of time. But the age in which those abstractions ruled the human mind seemed to Comte in its turn to be making room for scientific interpretation of physical facts, —the only legitimate intellectual employment of mankind, and destined to be the universal philosophy, in the further advance of society.

What is the further outcome of this physical faith?

Whether a humanity sustained by naturally formed and naturally applied science is to be the final stage, in which progress is perfected, is not fully explained. Perhaps the physical science stage is expected to last till the process of disintegration begins; when the physically interpreted planet itself will resolve into pristine fire-mist. But even before this catastrophe, a pessimist issue of merely physical faith, in what may turn out to be an untrustworthy universe, may have relieved the planet of its minute philosophers, perhaps by suicide as the practical application of an apotheosis of despair.

Comte assumes the inconsistency of theistic with physical faith.

So Comte represents abstract metaphysics as subversive of crude theology, in the progressive evolution, and physical science as in the end disintegrative of both. In each step of advance towards the wholly physical and alone legitimate interpretation of the universe, he sees the retreat of abstract metaphysics and of superstitious theology, which is all that he recognises, from the territory conquered by science; so that when the scientific victory is universal, the universe will be *seen* to be incapable of being interpreted in the light of necessities of reason, and of religious faith in every form. But man must then have lost the final faith and hope, by which I have argued that his interpretation even of physical nature is sustained throughout, and in which his moral strength consists.

Instead of recognising in divine moral trust the reasonable foundation and culmination of science.

Does not a deeper philosophy than that of Comte proceed on the principle that the physical interpretations of science, instead of excluding enlightened metaphysical and religious interpretations, is itself indispensably sustained by these; that ever-advancing discoveries of natural meanings, and of natural relations of means and ends, are discoveries of conditions which so far express divine ideas, and which thus conduct to the religious conception, in faith that the Whole is the expression of the perfect goodness or intending Reason? Wholly agnostic faith in progress is necessarily incoherent: according to its profession, it is wanting in the moral assurance that, notwithstanding intervals of seeming regress, things *must* be working together for good to all those who are struggling to live in conformity with divine ideal and law, as in nature and in man, and in whose persons the human world is accordingly becoming more divine. In short, the faith in progress involves, by implication, a teleological conception, and those who really accept it must be at least unconsciously sustaining themselves in theistic trust and hope.

LECTURE IV.

MIRACULOUS INTERFERENCE. WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

The idea of miracle, and its connection with faith in the religious or optimist conception of the universe.

THE popular idea of miracle, as divine interference with the divine order in nature, is associated with further revelation of God to man, and particularly with the enigma of moral evil on this planet. A revelation of God as humanised in the ideal man Christ Jesus is regarded as miraculous entrance of God into man, for recovering to goodness persons who have made themselves bad, but who might become good in response to this miraculous revelation of divine mercy, or appeal to presupposed but dormant faith and hope in Omnipotent Goodness. To give emphasis to this appeal to latent religious faith, and to its culmination in a supreme object for faith, hope, and love that is more easily conceivable by man than Omnipotent Goodness vaguely personified,—to make it emphatic, or a signal example of Divine adaptation—physical miracles are alleged. Christianity is above all others the form of religion of which the claim is presented in this particular way. Physical wonders are more or less associated traditionally with other religions; but the one for which a succession of them is claimed, in justification of its fuller and more humanised revelation—that is regarded as in itself a miracle, somehow superior to divine natural law—is the Christian, including its early Hebrew development. The Jews craved miracles; the Greeks preferred science, and were repelled by a religion that was represented as a miracle, or that asked men to see God signally a miraculous resurrection.

Questions suggested by the supposition of miraculous interference with the Divine natural order.

All this suggests a prior question—What is a miracle? If it is conceived as an external event, or as a spiritual experience, which cannot be explained by divine power normal—either in outward nature or in human nature, and which must therefore be referred to God, under some different conception, this raises a question about the sort of events and inward experiences that can, and those that cannot, be scientifically explained by divine causation, according to natural conditions. Is man able to distinguish between what is done immediately by God according to natural law, and what is done miraculously, or in isolation from natural sequence? Is he fit to determine exactly the latent capacity of his own divinely inspired spirit mind, in its theistic faith? What about the relation of miraculous outward events, and miraculous mental experiences, to the progressive evolution supposed to determine mankind, and to be within the horizon of man's intellectual vision? Is a miracle an event that can harmoniously assimilate with the progressive evolution in nature; or with the original "inspiration" which "gives man understanding," in the form of Common Reason? Is a miracle a phenomenon that Universities, Royal Societies, or persons who devote themselves to the interpretation of nature can have to do with; or is it something so outside nature, and outside human agency, that it must be kept apart, as foreign to science—something even on which reason must not exercise itself? Is miraculous revelation of God to be assimilated through some mystical process; or through absolute dependence on external authority postulated as infallible? Or may it be tested, in the ordinary critical way, by those accustomed to weigh evidence? Again, is a miracle an interference for a purpose by God with God's ordinary laws in nature, or is it this only relatively to human experience? What is the criterion of miraculous, as distinguished from natural, events; or of miraculous, as distinguished from normal spiritual experience? Men differ widely in their ideas of what is and is not naturally and spiritually possible, without interference. An event which in one age is considered miraculously divine is after-

wards discovered to be a natural issue, evolved by God according to a discovered law. What is regarded as miracle by an ignorant man is found by an expert to be natural. In the progress of science, may not all supposed miraculously divine events be reduced to their places in the divine cosmical order? And if they can be so explained, they do not cease in consequence to be immediately caused by God. Would the discovery, for instance, that rise of conscious life in an organism, or restoration of a dead man to life, are examples of cosmical law—would this divorce these events from God? Can supposed miraculous interference, if thus only relative to man's limited intelligence, mean a revelation really unique? Must we suppose two distinct acts of the Universal Power—one exerted cosmically, conditioned by natural causes; the other exerted miraculously, unconditioned by any natural cause;—and must we suppose that the second of these is a more difficult, and less orderly, divine exertion than the other? If so, what is the ground in reason for this supposition?

May not "miraculous" revelation be really natural, in the large meaning of "nature"?

Questions like these about miracle are apt to arise at this point in our course of thought, and the idea of *miraculousness*, as characteristic of events reported to have happened on this planet, seems to demand consideration. We have to look at their relation to the rationale of the faith and hope in God which is tacitly postulated in all human experience. Is faith in miraculous revelation of God different in kind from implied yet dormant trust in Omnipotent Goodness, or is it only *this* further unfolded, and with a humanised or more conceivable object of worship?

Can either philosophy or natural science be concerned with miraculous events?

It may seem that a miracle bears on its face that it must be at any rate something foreign to science and to "natural" theology—even in the widest meaning of "natural." To refer to miracle at all may be regarded as out of place, in a philosophical inquiry into the reasonableness of moral faith and filial hope in the Universal Power—out of place especially in all scientific inquiry. Is not a miracle an event that has emerged in the history of the planet *without a human or a natural cause*, as a

consequence of arbitrary will on the part of the Universal Power? Is not the miraculous issue supposed to afford a guarantee for faith in the divine infallibility of the persons who appear as passive in the miraculous "interference"—what seem to be *their* words invested with a divine infallibility, the "inspired" person's organism as it were the automatic "medium" of a perfect oral message or book? For if a claim to miraculous infallibility, apparently verified by fulfilment of the claimant's prediction of his own resurrection after his death, *could* turn out after all to be false, this would imply that the Universal Power was morally untrustworthy — because in this instance, therefore possibly in others, an impostor; so that we are put to moral and intellectual confusion.

The physical marvels of modern science, and physical miracles.

Again. Are not miraculous interferences events free from natural causes? This definition removes them from science, which cannot deal with events that have *no* natural cause: science, the issue of search for natural causes, can have nothing to say to phenomena for which it is assumed there can be no place in the natural evolution of the cosmical system. Scientific experiment is bringing into light innumerable natural causes and effects hitherto unsuspected, and in its light men are able to adapt to human convenience in unexpected ways the cosmic web in which we find ourselves involved. Applied discoveries of causal connections among phenomena are called "miracles of science"; but *they* are miraculous only because they surprise men—not because they are events divorced from all natural causes, while apparent within the cosmical system.

Are miracles, as isolated events, out of place in the philosophical rationale of faith?

Thus excluded from science, physical miracles may also seem to be not less remote from metaphysics. In metaphysical philosophy what satisfies must involve something fixed and final—whether with perfect comprehension or omniscience, out of which all mystery is eliminated, or through final faith, in which we are moved to unconditional trust, notwithstanding its necessary remainder of incomplete knowledge or mystery. But philosophy turns away from what is only occasional, isolated, transitory—what belongs only to times and places—to

what has happened only in a certain year, and only on some spot,—especially something long past, and so less and less impressive in the present, as the years roll on, leaving the "miraculous" event at an ever-increasing distance. Isolated historical facts do not assimilate with eternally fixed philosophy. The wonderful events reported as having made their appearance in the world, which form the stock of physical miracle, *per se* look unassimilative. If they are neither outward events that are naturally bound up with the divine cosmical system, nor divine inspirations latent in the spirit of man, they seem to be incapable of connection, unfit to harmonise, with the moral and filial faith which I have put before you, as the eternally reasonable attitude of man towards Omnipotent Goodness.

Must not all miracles, in course of time, become gradually prehistoric?

As events that were only occasional, and that are supposed to be absolutely isolated, so far as natural causation is concerned, our information about past miracles can be only external and empirical, dependent on a human testimony that is gradually becoming inaudible, if indeed it is not unheard after the lapse of ages. David Hume argued that miracles must be impossible to prove, at least so far as their evidence depends on history and tradition; because faith in individual testimony can never be as credible as the cosmic faith that every event must have a natural cause: human experience of the uniformity of the physical evolution is more credible than any historic record of its non-uniformity can be: witnesses are found fallible, but the course of nature is never found fallible; and even if an infallible witness could be produced, when pitted against the infallible natural order, the contradiction between the two infallibles could only produce sceptical paralysis of all faith, into which a thinker, baffled by what is self-contradictory, inevitably subsides. But leaving out of account this ingenious logical puzzle of David Hume, which exercised a past generation; and granting that, within narrow limits of time, the occurrence of an event that had *no* natural cause may be made credible through tradition,—can it remain credible after the lapse of ages has left the reported miracle at an immeasurable

distance. To-day, the records of mankind may make us certain of events that happened a few hundred, or even a few thousand, years ago. But what can be their credibility after man has existed on the planet for hundreds of thousands of years? How must physical miracles look that are reported to have occurred millions of years before? Can events so inconceivably remote be still available for strengthening and enlightening religious faith and hope in the Universal Power; and can there *then* be any security for an expanded faith and hope that depends upon an event attested by this unimaginably prolonged tradition, instead of upon God personified in nature, in the moral implicates of reason, and found by divine development of the spirit latent in man, which, as inspiration of the Almighty, gives him understanding?

If an event called miraculous should appear, could the spectator be certain that it was not caused by God naturally?

The critical temper might suggest other obstacles to a philosophical recognition of events supposed to intrude into cosmical order miraculously, or unconditioned by any physical cause. Not only is history a precarious vehicle for the conveyance of information about any event, and increasingly so through thousands or millions of years, but our five senses are found to deceive us even with regard to present events: men notoriously mistake their own fallible interpretations of what they see for something actually seen. The ignorant seek for wonders; and, not responding to the inspiration awakened in "the prophets," imagine that they would be persuaded if they saw a man rise from the dead. Miracles are found in the early histories of religion. But did the reporters see what they believed they saw? Prejudice is apt to induce interpretations of presented phenomena that are in harmony with the sentiment that is dominant in the spectator: visual perceptions produced by the dominant idea are mistaken in a rude age for realities. The record of miracles is in this way apt to be poisoned at its source. Unperceived events are supposed to be perceived: the fancied perception is only the spectator's misinterpretation of what happened. Or, if the event did happen, is there ground in reason for the assumption that it was an event divorced from *every* natural

cause? Is not this a presumptuous assumption, on the part of human beings, who have discovered a small number only of the innumerable natural causes that are gradually disclosing themselves, in what is perhaps unbeginning and unending natural sequence? Perhaps the supposed miracle may turn out, after experimental inquiry, to be only one of the marvels of science. Man, in his victorious struggle with nature, may even discover means by which the "miracle" may be converted into an example of his own skill, when he is able to repeat it in an experiment. For what limits can be set to progress in the discovery of natural causes? What in early times were supposed miracles of healing are now produced by means familiar to the physician. The natural results in the telegraph and the telephone are miracles when tried by the knowledge of a former age. Are we justified then in taking for granted that restoration of life after physical death is an event beyond the laws of natural causes; or that men may not become able so far to make natural causes their servants as to introduce life where there was none, or to restore it after it had ceased to appear?

The supposed absurdity of any event being destitute of a natural cause.

These are considerations which are apt to make men educated in modern ideas of historical criticism, and in scientific interpretation of the material world, disposed to assume the absurdity of miracle; and to treat all reports of events said to be destitute of natural causes as concerned with something not only foreign to philosophy and science, but unworthy of reasonable attention. That whatever can be reported with truth as having happened on this planet must be capable of *physical* explanation is their implied dogma. Does life actually appear where there was none before? This appearance, it would at once be taken for granted, must be an illusion, unworthy of investigation; or, if it cannot be overlooked, let it be referred for its natural explanation to experts of the Royal Society; or let the report of its occurrence be tested by experts accustomed to test documentary evidence. That it is *inexplicable physically* is the one hypothesis which would be dismissed without being tested. Of course many

events that *are* physically explicable are allowed to be—as yet, if not for ever—inexplicable by man; but it is taken for granted that they *might* all be referred to natural causes, in a true and full interpretation of nature, by beings of larger intelligence and more varied experience than man.

Is not nature, as universal providential order, itself miraculous?

The prevailing disposition to see miracles in this light recalls our finally theistic interpretation of physical causation already explained. What is meant by nature, and what by the natural causation which a physical miracle is supposed to supersede? If "nature" means only what is coextensive with the ultimately mysterious succession of physical causes, and if *all* physical events are supernaturally caused — *causation by intending Will* being the *only* originating power of which man has rational assurance—then the evolving universe itself must be a constant miracle. We are all living, and moving, and having our being in a possibly unbeginning and unending order of cosmical change that is absolutely trusted in, as the miraculous, or naturally inexplicable, manifestation of providential moral Reason. Is there any way of finally conceiving the universe that is so reasonable, so satisfying to man as he ought to be, as this is? It carries back all physical interpretability of nature immediately to the eternal moral Agent; all other so-called causes—except persons, who *can* make *themselves* bad—being only metaphorically causes, really the passive subjects of evolutional metamorphosis. Can any particular physical miracle be *so* miraculous, one is ready to ask, as this constant miracle of the universe of things and persons, continually present? It loses its novelty, and ceases to suggest its miraculousness, only on account of its commonness, and the unreflecting prejudice, that to discover the physical cause of an event is to discover that God is *not* the agent in its outcome;—so that each discovered physical cause seems to put God farther away. A metaphorical "power," attributed to the material cause, is in this way made to narrow the sphere of divine operation; so that, in the event of a universal victory of natural science, Divine Power would be totally superseded, and the universe re-

garded at last under a wholly natural or non-religious conception, with its mysterious past and future emptied of moral meaning.

Is not the universe more marvellous than any special event in it can be?

So the physical universe itself can be conceived as a constant miracle, under order and adaptations which are the persistent expression of active moral Reason. Man finds no other originative power than spiritual power. Is not Omnipotent Goodness, it may even be asked, *more* impressively involved in the universal physical evolution, on which inevitable faith and hope put finally the religious interpretation, than in occasional miracles, which are also referred to the immediate agency of God, in some abnormal exercise of divine power? Is not the gradual evolution of the solar system a *greater* miracle, if one may speak of degrees of the miraculous, than the reported arrest of the sun upon Gibeon, or of the moon in the valley of Ajalon? Is not the gradual evolution of the living organisms (man included) which this planet now contains, as much a miracle as the return to life, on the same planet, of a man that was dead?

Can special miracles be more divine than all events under natural law are?

The physically conditioned universe throughout presupposes pervading Perfect Goodness, as the ground at least unconsciously assumed for trust in natural law. It presupposes a constant miracle—if miraculous power means power that is morally free. That religious conception must be narrow which fails to see immediate action of God in *all* that occurs under conditions of natural uniformity; or which looks for direct divine action only in "interference" with divine natural law. Whence the supposition that God must be somehow more at the root of "special creation" and "miracle" than at the root of universal moral providence; and more in some providences than in the universal providence which comprehends all particulars in all relations, including all that concern each man? How is there something more divine in preserving three men in a furnace than there is in fire when it is naturally burning, or in rain when it is naturally falling? Is the incarnation of God in the perfect Man more miraculous than the normal incarnation of God in Nature and in Man?

Must the Universal Power, at the heart of all physical order, be manifested always under laws of physical order?

Here further questions arise. *Must* all events that happen be physically conditioned? Do physicial events in all cases need to have causes in the material world, as the indispensable condition of their occurrence? Is the constant miracle of the universe in its natural uniformities the only possible miracle? Is it the only divine revelation that is reasonable? Whether the constant miracle, by which the world is kept in its providential natural order, when measured only by the visible issues, is or is not greater than the arrest of the sun or moon, or than the resurrection of a person who was dead—may there not be room, under a more comprehensive Divine Science than that exemplified in material sequence, for an *occasional* occurrence of events that are *not* the outcome of divine action conducted under conditions of natural law, but in which the Universal Power is unconditioned by, while in harmony with, operation and change according to physical law? The divine maintenance of outward nature may involve greater power than any occasional miracle. Notwithstanding, in a universe charged throughout with Adaptation, in which every event is not only connected under natural law with every other, but in which every event is a means to what appears to man as a designed end, and the Whole as designed by Perfect Goodness to make persons good, including those who have made themselves bad,—in our conception of a universe thus teleologically constituted, are we at liberty, with our weak intelligence and narrow experience, to assume dogmatically that physically conditioned activity of the Universal Power is the *only* sort of divine activity that is reasonable, or adapted to the Whole? May there not be divine design in occasional miracles that appear, to man at least, to be independent of all natural causes, if not of rational order?

Is proof of the impossibility of special miracles possible, under the

Probably man's teleological conception of the universe is not adequate to determine whether physical events can make their appearance independently of physical laws, through the agency of the Power that *also* operates, as it seems normally, according to physical methods. If this be so, it seems to follow that the impossibility of a

"miraculous" assimilation of the Natural Law of divine activity by the higher Law of Adaptation cannot be proved, and that any alleged instance of what looks like a miracle of this sort is open to the tests of experience and historical criticism. But if occasional miraculous events may be destitute of physical causes, their miraculousness cannot be tested by the inductive methods which lead up to the discovery of physical causes: for, *ex hypothesi*, there is no physical cause of a miracle to be discovered. May an occasional miracle not be an event in nature, the significance of which depends upon its *moral* relation to *persons*, rather than in its *physical* relation to *things?* Especially if experience presents a planet peopled with persons who are bringing into existence what ought not to exist, and for which there is no *a priori* necessity —may not experience reasonably present certain events in rational correlation with this fact? Is it necessary to suppose that the Universal Power is less able to transcend the sphere of material sequence than men are, when they originate invisible acts of will for which they are responsible? Is God obliged in reason to be conditioned according to external natural law? May not divine agency be manifested in nature for a moral purpose, while it is uninterpretable by man in terms of physical sequence?

known limits of man's experience of the Universal Power?

Spinoza's argument for the impossibility of miracles may be taken as expressing the common scientific difficulty. The system of nature, it is by implication argued, must be already perfect, if it is divine. Its occasional miraculous modification would imply its imperfection; for what is always perfectly good does not admit of being altered and mended by an afterthought. To admit a miracle is to admit finite imperfection in divinely natural law: it also implies inconstancy or caprice, not the divine perfection which leaves no room for amended thoughts. What is already perfect does not permit of improvement by occasional miracle. For God to suspend or supersede His own perfect order in nature is to put a slur upon natural causation; as Nature is divine, occasional miraculous action would be acknowledgment that God or Nature can be irrational; and discredit of nature

Spinoza's argument for the impossibility of miracles takes for granted that they must manifest caprice or unreason.

thus leads to universal scepticism. In other words, to interpose occasional miracles in the physical system would be to make it other than the perfectly coherent system which science presupposes that it must be. And so we are asked to conclude that the entrance into existence of any visible event, or any spiritual experience, of which no natural account can be given, is impossible.

Does not this argument proceed upon too narrow a conception of what is divinely reasonable, in a universe that includes persons, or beings who can make themselves bad?

All this might be sufficient, if the universe were a wholly non-moral universe—if it consisted of *things* only, and not also—this too in its highest humanly known aspect—of good and bad *persons*, who are limited in intelligence and experience. For in the case supposed, the only sort of science possible would be in the sciences commonly called "natural," which search for constant antecedents of events. It might also be an argument, if men were only conscious automata, who could have no more than a physically scientific interest in themselves or in anything, and who could not, *in any degree*, make or unmake their own character. But this is not the universe in which man finds himself. This is a world in which men can and often do act badly, and in which, accordingly, without unreason, God may be revealed under a higher order than can be measured by man in terms of physical connections that are visible in nature—yet not inconsistent with these. The existence of persons may require in reason an unfolding of a larger divine Adaptation than appears in physical causation measured only by human science. It seems consistent with reason that the physical method should not be the highest form in which Omnipotent Goodness is revealed even in the material world; and also that, in the final rationale of the universe, the order of external nature should have a subordinate place, in a harmony of the Whole which may exceed man's speculative imagination.

The kingdoms of Nature and of Grace: Things and Persons.

At any rate miracles cannot be irregular events, if "irregular" means irrational or capricious—on the part of the trusted Universal Power. So far as it is revelation of God, miracle must be the manifestation of perfect reason. But does it follow that all that happens must

in reason be finally referable to physical causes; or that physical divine system may not be subordinate to, while capable of harmonious assimilation with, a Higher Ideal. There may be no *physically natural* law of "occasional" miracles discoverable, and yet there may be reason in them. Matter is the organ and servant of human and divine Spirit. But do we know enough about the office of the physical system in the economy of the universe to justify the assumption that issues cannot appear in the material world, or in a human mind, independently of any *physical law* of God in nature that can ever be construed in science; yet without contradicting or interrupting any of those laws? "I hold," says Leibniz, "that when God works miracles He does it, not in order to supply the wants of *nature*, but those of *grace;* and whoever thinks otherwise must have a very mean notion of the wisdom and power of God." Occasional miracles may be in that case divine acts, proper to a universe that includes persons or moral agents; while they would be out of place in a universe of things, wholly under mechanical relations.

Their harmonious relations.

If God is miraculously revealed in the sense that the natural is finally developed into supernatural revelation, then the superficial antithesis of nature and supernatural disappears. And under the limitation of human intelligence, the moral response which the deeper, or so-called miraculous, revelation receives from the spiritual constitution latent in man would be the evidence of its divinity. All the more if it could be shown that the revelation we call miraculous more distinctly unfolds the implicates of theistic faith and hope, and is therefore more richly divine and reasonable, than the more attenuated revelation of Omnipotent Goodness that is tacitly presupposed in all experience.

That Christianity should be found to be *the* natural religion, would not make it undivine.

But if, in the progressive development of the human mind, and our increased knowledge of natural causes, man's conceptions of what is natural should become so enlarged as that the whole Christian conception of God should be seen to arise out of the ordinary course of nature—Christian faith would then be discovered to be the most natural religion of all, but surely not on that account

undivine. May not this "miraculous" revelation of Perfect Goodness, therefore making for the goodness of all persons, be latent in the primary postulate of all human experience, which tacitly assumes the final trustworthiness, and so the omnipotent goodness, of the Universal Power as the essence of our final faith? In the deeper and wider meaning of "natural," all revelation of God must be in harmony with what is finally natural; — otherwise it could not be thought or reasoned about. For thought or reasoning, so far as it is applicable, implies rational coherence in that which is thought or reasoned about—if not under laws of physical causes, yet under teleological relations of means and end—or of yet higher categories in the intellectual system of the universe. Probably the legitimate idea of an "occasional" miracle is to be looked for in our teleological reason. It is an event in nature that is incapable of reduction by man under the physical conception;—thus remaining always a physical mystery of the human points of view; while it perhaps admits of explanation, under the teleological conception, in which the universe is taken as the revelation of Divine Design.

A deepening at once of the ideas of universal natural order, and of the ultimate miraculousness of the Universe.

Ordered human progress, and miracle or what is called miraculous interference—are these two conflicting ideas? The supposition of their inconsistency may explain the sceptical sadness regarding man which has diffused itself in this nineteenth century in Europe and elsewhere. But may not an honestly agnostic spirit illustrate in this instance too, how critical negation is really a factor in progressive movement towards a larger affirmative faith? For is not the nineteenth century, in consequence of this negative criticism, closing with a profounder sense than the world has before reached, at once of the universality of physical law, and of miraculousness at the root of the universe? Do we not begin to see that the final presupposition of Omnipotent Goodness at the centre is not subversion of physical order and science, but rather its foundation and its life? Visible nature appears no longer on the hollow final foundation of a dogmatical physical uniformity. Beneath this otherwise uncertain

ground, it is further interpretable as the constant providence of perfect moral reason — the providential procedure having for its chief end, at our point of view, the education of *persons* according to an order that is in its last conception divine, the temporal procedure in the school of God for the development and trial of spirit in man. The universal cosmical order merges at last in universal divine adaptation of the material world to moral agents, for advancement or recovery of their ideal.

LECTURE V.

THE FINAL VENTURE OF THEISTIC FAITH.

Philosophy is meditation upon Death.

PHILOSOPHY, according to Plato, is meditation upon death. This is the voice of poets and thinkers outside and within Christendom. That expectation of death makes human life miserable, and that this misery may be removed by the philosophy which sees only the peace of eternal sleep in the dissolution of the body, is the key-note of the most sublime poem in Roman literature. The final destiny of men has attracted contemplative thought in the successive generations which have passed into the darkness, asking whither they were going? The books which record human conjectures about the secret kept by death might form a library. They belong to ancient, medieval, and modern times, in all countries and races. Among our countrymen, it is the theme of the "Cypress Grove" of William Drummond, the pensive poet of Hawthornden. The meditative tenderness of Wordsworth's "Essay upon Epitaphs" presents death in one aspect, taken at a higher point in his "Ode on Intimations of Immortality." Moral faith in the immortality of man, tempered by modern doubt, is the note of Tennyson in "In Memoriam." Isaac Taylor's 'Theory of Another Life' is an ingenious exercise of imagination in anticipation of that which follows death.

The final problem, as related to the death of Men.

Death is directly concerned with the final human problem as regards one only of its three data—namely, the conscious ego — distinguished from outward things and from God. Am I to be finally and for ever self-consciously

distinct from unconscious Matter, and from the Universal Power? Am I so mixed up with the material world, in which I find myself now incarnate, that I must share the fate of my body, and cease for ever to be conscious as soon as I have ceased at death to be visibly incarnate? The world, of which my bodily organism is a part, is the subject of constant metamorphoses. Am I only one of the ephemeral metamorphoses into which ever-changing Matter naturally resolves itself? Can I be only this, if I find my invisible self distinguished by a unique persistent identity through all changes of this embodied life? Our bodies and outward things are in constant flux: "identity" applies to them only metaphorically. A human ego of half a century ago is connected with the human ego of to-day, in another way than that in which his body now is connected with his body of half a century ago. After a faint, or a dreamless sleep, we cannot but connect, as *numerically* one, the ego before those intervals of unconsciousness and the ego after them. Sanity requires that I should practically acknowledge this unique persistent sameness. And we are obliged to assume that human persons, in addition to this imperfectly comprehended difference between themselves and things, have a mysterious power of making themselves bad, of which one finds no trace in bodies.

Does the conscious person finally cease to be conscious with the dissolution of his body?

All this raises the supreme human question:—What is the relation of this now conscious person—this persistent subject of ever-changing pains and pleasures—this creator of good or evil acts—to the dissolution of his visible organism? Is the self-conscious ego transitory, so that at death, along with the organism with which life is now in constant correlation, the hitherto continuous self-consciousness also dissolves? Do human beings cease for ever to be conscious, when they cease to signify their conscious activity visibly? On this planet alone one finds hundreds of millions of conscious persons in each generation signifying to one another their invisible conscious activity—some of them showing the signs only for a few hours, a few it may be for a hundred years—after which the organism dissolves, and there is no more any sign.

The uniqueness of the self-conscious person, in contrast with the perennial change in nature.

Are there any facts, which the living may recognise, which show that moral agents may *not* be so involved in the metamorphoses of nature as that the dissolution of his body in death must mean the final cessation of the self-conscious person? There is at any rate something unique in self-conscious personality. Persons are under spiritual relations, as well as under physical relations; and, by their individual personality, they are distinguished both from the Universal Power and from outward things. Can we reasonably think of moral agents and non-moral things as alike in destiny,—yet unlike in the unique rational consciousness, continuous identity, and moral responsibility, which only persons possess, during this ephemeral embodied existence? Must we say, alike of men and brutes, that "as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again"? Can we even prove that physical death is the final extinction of all animals except man? Does theistic faith, in the full development of which we can really enjoy conscious life — does this final moral trust justify us in anticipating, not only future events in this world, but also persistent personal consciousness after bodily dissolution? Without an implied moral faith in the moral trustworthiness of the Universal Power, we have no assurance about *anything future:* our most natural anticipations may all be put to confusion: we cannot count on order, or on adaptation, in nature. It is by trusting ethical omnipotence, with all that this includes, that we can know and act now. Does this faith, in which human life is rooted, also involve reasonable hope that physical death will not make an end of personal life; and that something more manifestly divine than the strangely mixed experience of the universe we have on this planet may be expected? Our bodies are not our unique personality: they are conscious persons as revealed to the senses.

Can an atheist reasonably believe in

Can an atheist reasonably expect to live after his physical death? I would put a previous question,—Can atheists, with unreason only recognised at the root of All,

consistently have faith in *any* future event, either before or after death? For knowledge of God is trust in universally active moral reason, and therefore trust in Omnipotent Goodness as the Universal Power; but apart from this ultimate moral trustworthiness at the heart of the whole, the previsions of science, and the expectations of daily life, have no inherent reason. What is called "scientific verification" *presupposes* the divine reasonableness of trust in natural analogies and uniformity. A suspected witness cannot verify. The logical atheist, whose atheism is virtual rejection of this innate interpretability of nature, is, if consistent, incapable of prevision: at his point of view, the universe may become chaotic to-morrow, and unfit to be reasoned about or dealt with in any practical way. An atheistic universe has no ethical root. Its future may be universal hell. Fear would then make final cessation of conscious life the supreme hope. But under a more intrepid agnosticism, even the negative hope of endless unconsciousness is as little to be depended on as any other hope, under an untrustworthy Power. Hopeful expectation is essentially theistic, because theism is simply the principle of omnipotent moral reasonableness or goodness, articulately applied to the universe.

personal life after physical death, or indeed believe in anything beyond the feeling of the moment?

The infinite interest of the final question about this life of mixed good and evil, in which men now find themselves, disappears, on the conjecture that—after an interval of a few hours or a hundred years on this planet—all persons are transformed into unconscious things. Living habitually under this pathetic conception, men subside into sadness, if they are thoughtful; or into secular indifference, if, like the majority, they are unreflecting. I have said that at least an unconscious theistic faith is indispensable for indulgence in expectation of events before death; and the idea of moral obligation remains, whether persons, morally obliged to be good, exist only between birth and death or for a longer time. But the religious conception of the universe draws its sublime interest from an expectation that we are destined to continue during more than the momentary dream-life that depends on the mortal body. Is human immortality

The relation of all previsive inference to the final moral venture.

foreshadowed in the *character* of the Universal Power; notwithstanding the strangely mixed state of this corner of the universe, and its apparently capricious distribution of happiness and pain?

Analogies to a continuance of conscious personal life after physical death and their insufficiency.

But while all expectation is essentially theistic faith, and scientific expectation is more intelligent faith, there is a difference between scientific prevision of the temporal future within the present world, and prevision of life after the natural dissolution of the organism, through which the person now reveals himself to other persons, and lives incarnate on this planet, in his own place and time. If the conscious individual ego is a unique sort of being in the universe, the death of the organism, to which his personal life is now in correlation, is also a unique fact, in the sense that no adequate analogy to his own death can be found within the present experience of any living man. No doubt, life in human persons has already persisted through critical changes: all animal life illustrates this. Life in the womb, and life after birth; life with the body entire, and life after the body has been deprived by accident or otherwise of important organs—these are familiar changes, after which the conscious person is still found self-conscious. In dreamless sleep, or in a swoon, the continuity of the conscious life seems to be interrupted. "Sleep," says Sir Thomas More, "is the brother of death, in which we seem to die without really dying." Shakespeare conceives sleep as the "death of each day's life"; and "all our little lives are rounded with a sleep." But in this sufficient analogy with death is wanting. The persistency of the person is here verified: the broken consciousness returns into continuity with its past: memory can cross the gulf of this temporary death: moreover, the organism of the person was undissolved, instead of sharing in the unconsciousness of sleep by a temporary physical dissolution. Analogies of animal transformation —the caterpillar transformed into the butterfly, for instance—are all found inadequate, when compared with the visible consequences of physical death in man.

Uniqueness of the

The probable effect of the death of a person's physical organism upon his self-conscious and percipient life can

hardly be determined by facts like these. For the problem which the dissolution of the human body presents is absolutely singular. Living men cannot settle it by experiment, as they can determine by experiment the outcome of sleep or a trance; for in order to do this they would need to die, and have personal experience of the issue. Nor has the enigma been solved by communication with persons who have died: one effect of death seems to be to withdraw the material medium of communication between the living and the dead. The issue of their death is not communicated by dead persons; and no person now living has made the experiment of dying and returning into this embodied life. Alleged apparitions and messages from departed persons give no light. If faith in the continued consciousness of physically dead persons after their death must depend upon these sources, it seems to have no support in evidence.

phenomenon of physical death: it is foreign to the experience of persons living on this planet; and it seems to destroy our only means of communication with the dead.

Yet it does not follow that the hope that death is not the final end of individual persons is baseless. No doubt the case is not fully analogous to, or illustrated in, theistically sustained ordinary expectation, or previsions in natural science; its singularity lies partly in this—that the physical medium of verification is naturally withdrawn in death. But to assume, without proof, that a conscious person is so dependent for his conscious life upon his present organism, that his conscious life *must* cease when this organism dissolves, is to beg the question we are meditating about. The question is, whether the visible dissolution necessarily signifies the invisible dissolution; and it will not serve the interest of reason to take this for granted—without permitting any mode of determining the probability other than the physically scientific mode.

Faith in persistence of personal consciousness after death is not on that account necessarily baseless.

For one thing, we find a widespread faith, in all ages, and among various nations and races of men, that human persons *somehow* survive the physical crisis of organic dissolution. Articulate conceptions of what follows death doubtless vary widely, in the traditions and religions of mankind, and in the fancies of individuals. But while

It is, in innumerable forms of conception, a common faith.

there has usually been a sceptical minority, the mass of mankind, in the ancient, medieval, and modern world —in the East and the West, in Egypt, Persia, India, Greece, and Rome—Jews, Mohammedans, Christians—entertain an expectation that persons persist after death, whether in a lower and more attenuated or in a nobler life than that experienced before they died. The conception in most cases implies that the *post mortem* existence is not wholly unembodied; that the person retains, or gains after death, some intangible ghostly form of embodiment; or else, after an interval of unembodiment, recovers physical relations in some worthier form — a "body spiritual" instead of the present limiting body, in and through which spiritual consciousness has on earth become individual. That a spiritual body succeeds the natural body is the faith of most Christians.

Genuine Common Faith the divine inspiration which "giveth understanding."

That all genuine Common Faith, or the common rational sense of mankind, is divinely trustworthy, because inspired by God, is a postulate on which science itself rests, in all its previsive inferences. Scientific verification, as I have throughout argued, is finally unconscious religious trust. It has been scientifically verified that the sun will rise to-morrow; but till the sun shall have actually risen, the assertion only expresses *faith* in the divine natural order. All expectation, scientific or common, is so far a leap in the dark; it is taken without the light of sense. The expected event has not the proof afforded by felt perception till the event has happened. If sense were our only light, it would follow that we must remain in the darkness of doubt about *every* future event. To be practically consistent, if we insist that that only can be reasonable into which *no* ingredient of moral venture enters, we must cease to live; for life depends upon expectation, and expectation postulates faith in the divine reasonableness of the universe; which implies that men will not be finally put to scientific confusion by reasonable submission to this moral faith. If they must, the universe would be undivine illusion.

Scientific prevision,

The widespread faith in personal persistence through and after physical death, is incapable of experimental

verification to those who have not died. But is it less irrational to resist it, merely on the ground that it is only unverified faith, and not realisation, than it would be to resist the still unrealised expectation that the sun will rise to-morrow, or be eclipsed the day after, merely on the ground that this too is as yet only faith and not fact? For no one can *to-day see* the sun rising to-morrow, or its eclipse the day after. The expectation is reasonable faith, not yet confirmed by the event believed in. Actual sense is not the measure of what it is reasonable, and therefore philosophical, to believe or to disbelieve.

as well as the expectations and even the memories of common life, involve faith in what is unseen?

It is granted that there may be reason for the faith implied in our ordinary expectations of natural events; notwithstanding that, it is *only* faith. To refuse this would be to reduce human reason to narrow dimensions indeed, or rather to extinguish it altogether. To condemn, as *necessarily* irrational, the widespread expectation, that consciousness will persist after its visible organism has been dissolved by death, may after all be due to dogmatic narrowness. Actual sense is acknowledged not to be the measure of reasonable judgments about physical nature; and faith in *physical nature* is not necessarily the measure of reasonable faith regarding the destiny of *persons*, after they are physically dead. May there not be more in earth and heaven than is recognised in a wholly physical philosophy? A wholly physical may be an unphilosophical philosophy.

May there not be reasonableness in the expectation of personal life after death, as well as in scientific prevision?

Look more deeply into the larger faith. It may be criticised by physical, by metaphysical, or by moral tests. Take each of these in turn as criteria of this altogether unique sort of anticipation.

Critical tests.

The *physical* presumption, that conscious personal life finally ceases, when, by the death of the manifesting medium, it ceases to prove its continuance physically, is strong under wholly natural science. If reasonable faith in *post mortem* self-consciousness must be dependent on what is seen, or on physical inference from what is seen, the idea of personal persistence looks illusory—a

An exclusively physical knowledge of death, as presented in the dissolution of the

organism, affords, *per se*, no reason for expecting survival of the conscious person.

widespread delusion and anachronism, which may be expected to disappear with the gradual increase of human culture. A generation led by those who are physically scientific in their whole habit of reasoning, is naturally sceptical about what cannot be tested by visible experiment; distrustful of what are called metaphysical necessities; and even distrustful of the moral faith on which their physical science itself, unconsciously to themselves, constantly depends. If one dogmatically asserts that all questions of fact, whether about things or persons, must be decided by physical tests only, and rejects hyper-physical supports as abstract or fanciful,—the issue of human death is removed from reasonable investigation, along with the removal of the visible and tangible medium which connects the conscious person with physical science. Only, as I have said, the same dogmatic assumption is bound to remove, along with this question, all scientific questions together;—for natural science at last depends upon faith that is hyper-physical. Unless we hyper-physically assume the rationality or trustworthiness of the Universal Power, nature must remain scientifically uninterpretable, beyond the momentary datum of actual feeling—which isolated datum *per se* is unintelligible.

Difficulties that beset the idea of posthumous personal consciousness, in a physically scientific age like the present.

But let us face some of the *physical* difficulties which beset faith in the posthumous conscious persistence of the individualised and invisible person. For one thing, our experience of the relation between the visible organism and the invisible conscious life and feeling is—that changes in the one are found in a constant corresponding connection with changes in the other: the experimental inference would accordingly be, that total dissolution of the body must, under natural law, be followed by corresponding cessation of conscious personality; that the dissolution of the body must involve the dissolution of the conscious personal life that has been uniformly conditioned by the body, and made manifest to other persons only in and through the body. Again, a separation of the personal consciousness from the organised matter in which it is now involved is by us unimaginable. When the

sensuous imagination tries to realise self-conscious life after it has ceased to be incarnate, the unbodied life is infinitely more mysterious than any supposed change of locality, or of embodiment, which a man could pass through. To be transported in the body into one of the neighbouring planets, still more into one of the immeasurably remote stellar systems, would be an appalling prospect for a human being; but after all it would not be life out of *all* embodiment — placeless, if not also timeless, life; and solitary too, by dissolution of the familiar medium of communication between persons. Timeless perhaps; for, without perception of motion in space, what conceivable *measure* of duration remains: without the accustomed measure of duration which the periodic movements of the planets supply, distinct ideas of duration would disappear, leaving the person practically in a placeless and timeless life. Memory, too, if not totally emptied of the idea of time, is confronted by the ultimate difficulty of recollecting a personal history spread over innumerable millions of years;—not to speak of its *endlessness*, which raises an absolutely inconceivable issue. Language too—some sort of sensible or pictured symbol—is now not only the medium of communication between persons, but also an indispensable condition of solitary thought. Articulate language is an aggregate of visible or audible signs, which needs continued relation of personal consciousness to the sensible world. The dissolution of this connection seems to withdraw an indispensable instrument of intelligent life, without which living thought must die. The only conscious life which persons on earth have any experience of, or which is possible to imagine, is embodied conscious life. And the presumed unconsciousness, or impersonal existence, of men *before* their birth is in physical analogy with an assumption of their unconsciousness *after* death. Then the modern wholly sensuous imagination works in another way. Exclusive attention to visible and tangible phenomena makes the invisible supposed realities of a spiritual personality look like empty abstractions. Hence the favourite assumption, that if the conscious spirit persists, after the death of

its visible organism, it *must* be in correlation with an organism, subject to conditions of place and time like those with which we are familiar. And this narrow physical conception of possibilities suggests the physical difficulty of an overcrowded material world, even with its millions of suns and their systems;—in which, in the infinite future, with its endless accumulation of personal organisms, room cannot be found for all in planetary homes. If they must accumulate in endless millions on every star and planet, it seems to the imagination that this must in time issue in deficient physical accommodation.

The inadequacy of physical arguments for personal life after death.

These are illustrations of perplexities of sensuous imagination, in dealing with a question foreign to the course of nature, so far as nature comes within the experience of persons not yet dead. Sceptical silence seems the appropriate attitude of those who suppose that faithfulness to truth makes it necessary to accept only physical criteria, and sensuous imagination, for the determination of all questions. They ask how physical analogies can admit the reality of a life which no one now living can imagine, far less verify by experiment,—a life abstracted from all that is physical. Who can rest upon premisses of experience an inference absolutely singular, regarding the invisible destiny of conscious persons, who thus far have found themselves always incarnate;—their self-conscious individuality begun and maintained by the incarnation?

Metaphysical arguments show the abstract possibility, rather than the fact, of self-conscious survival after physical death.

But if continuous personal life after physical death is incapable of physical proof through science, perhaps it can be shown to be *metaphysically necessary*. Abstract impossibility of the final extinction of any conscious person has been asserted as a hyper-physical reason for inferring the persistence of the conscious person, notwithstanding the death of his body. But this abstract assertion can hardly be accepted as a foundation for a conclusion about a future fact; although it may suggest need for so unique a question as the issue of death being treated differently from questions about events that can be seen. The dogma of what is ambiguously called the "natural" immortality of man is another form of metaphysical pos-

tulate. This does not mean, I suppose, that a conscious person cannot be finally reduced to unconsciousness even under Omnipotent Universal Power; or that the endless existence of all the individual persons now in the universe is as necessary in reason as the endless existence of God. The ambiguous term perhaps means that as physical mortality is natural to the human body, so immortality is not less natural to self-conscious personality,—that the conscious ego cannot die except by an occasional miracle; and that if the personal soul were naturally only mortal, it would need a like miracle to become immortal —which carries us back to what was said of a supposed opposition between nature and supernature in the ideal natural or providential system. "Nothing can be plainer," we have been told, "than that the changes, decays, and dissolutions which we are continually seeing in natural bodies cannot possibly affect the active, simple, invisible substance of which we are conscious: such a being is indissoluble *by the force of external nature:* that is to say, it is naturally immortal." Bishop Butler argues that presumption of death being the destruction of consciousness must go upon the false supposition that persons are composed of atoms, and so capable of being dissolved. Referring to the fact that a human person is now an embodied person, he even argues that what each man calls *himself* is a consciousness not to be identified in argument with bodies, which are all only aggregates of molecules, so that "what we call *our bodies* are no more part of *ourselves* than any other matter around them." And indeed, abstractly speaking, it is as easy to suppose that we can exist consciously without bodies as with them; or that we may after death animate other sorts of bodies as that we animate our present ones now: the deaths of successive bodies may have no natural tendency to annihilate continuous personal consciousness, more than dissolution of any material object outside our bodies has. In this abstract way it is easy to suppose personal consciousness going on, uninterrupted by any physical dissolution—even continuing to have all its present sensations without the intervention of what we call "our bodies." Why not a

perception of colours, without the percipient possessing eyes, and of sounds, without ears; for seeing and hearing are states of consciousness, which may be supposed going on independently of organised matter.

They fail to overcome scepticism, suggested by the dissolution of the body.

These are speculations. They tend to show the *abstract possibility* of much that exceeds physical imagination and sensuous experience; but they are too remote from matter of fact to overcome the sceptical presumption to which the visible dissolution of the body gives rise. Abstract reasoning and "easiness to suppose" leave us still in front of a hypothetical future: they excite dreams, without determining the reasonableness of faith in the dream.

The ethical basis of faith in personal life after death.

Thus exclusive physical science affords no evidence that a person persists in conscious life after his present incarnation has ended,—indeed suggests on the whole that the conscious person has ended too; and abstract metaphysical speculation about personality, while it expands speculative vision, is yet unable to sustain reasonable belief. But are we still left in ignorance, when we turn from outward nature and abstract metaphysics to the rational implicates of theistic faith; when we intelligently acknowledge the Omnipotent Goodness presupposed in the triplicity of our primary data; and after we have reflected upon the inspired spiritual constitution latent in man, hardly evoked indeed into consciousness in many, not fully evoked in any? Does this inward "inspiration of the Almighty" reveal that the conditions under which the moral agent is maintained in his present physical organisation are inadequate to the moral meaning and chief end of man? Would cessation of individual personal life, after existence "in the body," for only a few days, or even a hundred years, really put *moral* intelligence to confusion, and so raise doubt even about the physical interpretability of external nature, when personal experience could be only a hollow momentary dream? Is there not something, too, in the *involuntary* entrance into existence of *individual persons*—who, unlike *things* and their passive metamorphoses, are all responsible for their own character, able to resist as well as to accept their divine

ideal—is there not something in this that opposes itself to the idea of persons withdrawn from responsible personality into final unconsciousness, almost as soon as their personality begins? Is not the supposition of the annihilation of beings of this sort, before they have had time to discover what and where they are, an issue that is out of harmony with implicates of our inevitable faith and hope in the omnipotent goodness and infinite mercy of the Power that must be eternally making for the goodness of bad persons? Does such an admission of persons, for a moment, into a dangerous moral trial, on a planet that seems to have had *them* as the chief end of its evolution, not look like caprice of unreason rather than manifestation of omnipotent goodness? Can the supposition of the dissolution of conscious persons in the death of their bodies be reconciled with trust and hope in the perfect goodness of the Universal Power, which I have urged as at once the tacit assumption in all human experience, and the last word of true philosophy? If positive answers to these questions about moral agents like men seem presumptuous, at the point of view to which the human questioner is confined — remote intellectually from the infinite centre — does not theistic faith at least imply that confidence in Omnipotent Goodness is the only reasonable principle according to which man can die as well as live; and that to die in this moral venture in a divine universe may be ethically better for the living than a demonstration which would supersede education of moral faith? To those whose lives are habitually directed in theistic trust towards the realisation of their true spiritual ideal, physical death is not a leap in the dark, but rather in the divine light which illuminates all present experience. In the divine universe of theistic faith man can make his exit from the body, in the assurance that it is well; yet, like the patriarch, "not knowing whither he is going." Hope of the continued existence of human persons, notwithstanding the disappearance of their bodies, is not, indeed — like faith in the omnipotent and omnipresent goodness of the Universal Power—an indispensable postu-

late of all reliable intercourse in human experience with the evolving universe of things and persons; but its sceptical disintegration surely disturbs this fundamental faith, and so tends to total pessimist doubt.

Is the mixture of Evil with Good in the universe endless or only transitory?

The enigma of moral evil leaves us in front of a further question, raised by the very hope of posthumous life. Is the existence of persons who can make and keep themselves *bad* only a transitory episode in the history of the universe; or must there be for ever bad persons, increasing in number, and increasingly bad? Notwithstanding the ambiguous appearance which the world of sentient and moral beings presents in this corner, and the irregular adjustments of pleasure and pain to their good and evil acts,—so apt to paralyse faith and hope,—are pain and error and vice in the divine universe in the end to disappear by perfectly realised goodness in all persons, embodied or unbodied, and in all worlds? Are all certain at last to become what they ought to be; certain in the end to realise individually the divine ideal of man; or at least to be for ever approaching to this, on the path "which shineth more and more unto the perfect day"?

Conjectures.

The alternative answers to this supreme question are full of difficulties which seem to be incapable of settlement. That the immoral agency of persons—their personal power to depart from their moral ideal—deepened and perhaps finally confirmed by habit—*may* become an absolutely final "election" to evil *by themselves*, which even Omnipotent Goodness *cannot* overcome—consistently with the free personality of those who persist in keeping themselves undivine—is one conjecture: it involves the mystery of the existence in the divine universe of innumerable persons, living endlessly, increasing in number, and all becoming worse. On the other hand, that conscious persons, as well as their present bodies, are capable of extinction by the Universal Power; that only the morally progressive, who have withdrawn resistance to what is divine, finally retain conscious personal life, while all who persist on the downward grade are finally reduced to unconsciousness—so that evil life dies

out, or is continued only in other equally transitory undivine persons, is a second alternative. Under a still more sanguine conception, in mysterious consistency with free personality, all moral perversion, along with the suffering thus introduced, will in the end disappear, in a final rise into goodness,—through God's love of goodness for its own sake,—of all beings who have made themselves bad. A universe that is thus *at last morally perfect*, is the universe which Omnipotent love of goodness *for its own sake*, and consequent divine security for its universal prevalence, may seem ethically to require. Omnipotent love of goodness for its own sake appears as a security that all persons on this planet, and throughout the universe, should be, or should become, for ever good. Yet to assume that this *must* be the final issue, indeed to take for granted that it consists with free agency in immoral persons, or that it is otherwise possible, may be undue presumption. Perhaps man's present moral education requires that the mystery should remain unrelieved, as a teleologically needed mystery.

An old yet ever new problem.

With this cloud still resting on Man, our course of meditative thought, awakened by the divine problem of the universe, and personal relations under it, comes to an end. It is the perennial question for humanity, which in each successive generation has attracted those who can recognise the pathos of the life in which human beings become involuntarily incarnated, and out of which they disappear at death. The final meaning of human life has more than exhausted the speculative genius of Plato and Aquinas, of Spinoza and Hume, of Leibniz and Hegel, and transcends the sublime imagination of Dante and Milton. The theological conception of the universe, including the outcome of man at last, must always be fresh to the reflecting mind, although it has engaged men from the beginning; and the divine problem necessarily takes new forms in advancing or fluctuating thought. When it is approached only in the spirit of speculative curiosity, or with the preconception that it must either be perfectly soluble or else wholly unintelligible, it seems to evade

the only settlement that is possible for man. Those again who insist upon the physical method of investigation as the only avenue to truth, logically conclude that the divine or final human question is an idle question. But its scientific insolubility, I have tried to show, need be no insuperable bar to a reasonable settlement, in theistic trust and hope, as the alternative to total uncertainty and despair, in case of the absence of omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient Goodness.

A RETROSPECT

A RETROSPECT.

I CLOSE with a retrospect. At the outset of this course of meditative thought I appealed to our human sense of the mystery of the Universe, into which we have been admitted—strangers to it, and without our leave—and from which—after a moment of morally responsible life—we disappear in Death. Meditation upon the predicament in which we thus involuntarily find ourselves urges final questions about the conscious ego, one's environment, and the Infinite Power that is universally operative in the change always going on in things and in persons. What means this infinitesimal personal life, dimly lighted amidst the darkness? What, too, is the function and significance of its material environment? Above all, what is the character of the Universal Power, tacitly if not consciously recognised as the finally uniting and reconciling principle of the ever-fluctuating universe of things and persons? Are things, and even persons, only transitory modifications of One Non-moral Substance or Power? Or must the personality of which I am conscious, in the interval between birth and death; the world of perceptible things which surrounds me; and the Power revealed, in and through persons and things,—must these three be philosophically distinguished, as three irreducible data of human experience?

Synoptical retrospect of the argument in the "Philosophy of Theism." The starting-point.

When I tried the former of these alternatives I found that even the interpretations of portions of our surroundings—which in daily life we all assume that we possess, and to which the natural sciences are gradually adding—seemed to have lost their indispensable reconciling prin-

Neither the phenomena presented to sense, nor the logic of sensuous

intelligence, can determine the true answer to this question.

ciple. I seemed to be losing myself in a meaningless universe — empty of persons moral or immoral — man with all his pretended sciences, the latest phenomenon in an inexplicable procession—the revelation, if it can be called revelation, of a Power concerning which I dare not postulate enough to justify me in concluding anything,—in doing or anticipating anything. Despair is the issue of the endeavour thus to comprehend as One Substance and Power the reality into which we enter when we become percipient of things and self-conscious.

The *homo mensura* method of dealing with the final question about the universe of realities.

But is there not—I proceeded to ask myself—is there not another method in which the final question about my life in the universe may be dealt with? Although I cannot grasp the Whole as if it were a finite premiss in a scientific argument, may I not, in some other way, come practically into reasonable relation with the Whole? May I not live in intercourse with it, under relations of a knowledge that is still human — yet relations even eternally necessary, in man's limited and intermediate point of view? May not the universal reality be sufficiently interpretable, by and for man, on this *homo mensura* principle? But then it must be the complete or ideal Man, not man as a sensuous intelligence only, nor yet as purely intellectual,—omitting his distinguishing moral and spiritual experience. Physical or natural science, concerned with non-moral things, is an inadequate application of the *homo mensura*. In a deeper or more real use of that method, the Universal Power must be postulated as Omnipotent Goodness. The *Divina mensura* —so humanised—is by implication the root of human life and knowledge.

This a *via media*.

Man's final relation to the universe of things and persons, worked out on the large *homo mensura* principle, does not rationalise the universal reality with Spinoza or Hegel in an Omniscience which eliminates mystery; nor does it leave man paralysed in total uncertainty, with David Hume. It postulates morally perfect Power at the root of experience, with a background of inevitable mystery, — a revelation this which may become enough for man, while it leaves something that

is by man speculatively unimaginable. It recognises the *via media*, intellectually intermediate between Omniscience and Nescience. Unable to see the Whole from the Divine Centre, we are obliged to postulate Perfect Goodness of the Universal Power—this latent in all man's intercourse with manifested reality—a working postulate found charged with meaning, in proportion as the persons who think and act upon it approach to the ideal Man. How has this method fared with us on trial?

This final moral postulate an indispensable assumption.

In the first place, our postulate was justified by the impossibility of intelligible experience, or of moral conduct, without trust and hope in the invisible Power that is omnipresent. Intercourse with things and persons *presumes* moral confidence in the Power at work throughout the Whole. To suppose practical indifference to goodness in the Universal Power, is virtually to forbid scientific or moral intercourse with that Power as presented in experience. We must avoid a finally undivine Universe as we avoid a suspected man. In all calculated activity we, at least unconsciously, take for granted the *ethical reliability* of the mysterious Power revealed in physical and human history. The absoluteness of ethical obligation, and the impossibility of interpreting ourselves or our surroundings, if the natural evolution is either a prolonged accident, empty of moral meaning, or a revelation of diabolical purpose—in either of these ways putting us to intellectual and moral confusion—is what justifies the theistic or moral conception as final. The sufficient reason for its adoption is, that unless an optimist faith is the final faith, there can be no truth about anything. If the life that emerges between birth and death rises out of, and subsides into, a finally unintelligible or morally untrustworthy universe, one can only say,—Let me escape from conscious life, and thus practically from the concrete universe, and return into the unconsciousness out of which I involuntarily emerged when I was born. His own annihilation becomes the chief end of the conscious ego;—if indeed, after paralysis of the fundamental ethical postulate, one can have any end to struggle for, and must not passively subside into speechless, motionless agnosticism.

Surrender of this final moral postulate paralyses human intelligence, and disintegrates experience.

In all intercourse with the universe let me therefore regard myself as a person dealing with Omnipotent Goodness, therein implied and partially revealed. Let me take this as the constant postulate in all interpretations of experiences. But this is to assume that ethical faith is the indispensable *rationale* of human life—its silently accepted preliminary—in its religious development the culmination of its deepest and truest philosophy. Moral faith is deeper than the deepest possible intellectual doubt, and is presupposed in all doubt that is reasonable. The ethical trust, needed for progressive interpretation of experience in science, supersedes the pessimist doubt and despair about everything, into which monist speculations, strictly interpreted, at last resolve. However sympathetically one tried to enter into the agnostic conception as final, there was always found *below it* a germ of moral confidence in the *character* of the Power that is universally operative,—as Power that is neither indifferent to physical and moral order, nor diabolic, but perfectly good, and therefore making for the goodness of all persons in the universe. So the Divine Ideal is presumed to be—to make and keep moral agents in the state in which they ought to be; and *somehow* to restore them to goodness, if any of them have made themselves morally bad.

The incarnation of God in Nature and Man, through which the Universal Power is virtually on speaking terms with men.

The Universal Omnipresent Power may be truly said to be on speaking terms with man, in and through a cosmical and moral order which in all its ramifications is *presumed* to be interpretable, *because* charged with active moral reason; not capricious, but absolutely good—although man's inability to occupy the Divine Centre must leave much that is physically or morally inexplicable. That the Infinite Power should be on speaking terms with man—through the sense symbolism of nature, and the inward inspiration of the spirit, above all in the ideal Man—this is surely not inconsistent with ultimately inaccessible mysteriousness in the God we have continually to do with. Revelation of God intelligible enough to regulate man's life in an otherwise mysterious universe, seems the way of answering final questions that is adapted to man. Divine presence throughout the

Whole is not an uncertain inference from the mixture of good and evil which this planet presents: the primary Divine datum is warranted, if it can be shown to be the indispensable condition of escape from speechless and motionless doubt and despair. If the Universe can possibly be in its heart a lie, faith in the meaning of *any* of its events is paralysed, and nature becomes uninterpretable. True knowledge, even in part, is foreclosed.

The Enigma of Theism.

Yet the language of experience addresses us in terms that are apt to give rise to distrust. The facts on this planet seem to reveal at best an uncertain purpose of mingled good and evil,—unless we annihilate morality, by supposing good and evil to be determined by supreme arbitrary will. Sceptical pessimism seems inevitable, if the state of sentient beings and self-conscious agents on this planet is taken empirically, as sole and sufficient evidence of the moral character of the Universal Power. The tragedy that is always going on here seems to ask us to withdraw the moral postulate which is needed to inspire human life. How can the sin and suffering we find in and around us be contained in a revelation of omnipotent goodness? The universal condition of man on this planet; the irregular distribution of happiness and pain among its sentient inhabitants; the apparent cruelty of the suffering; the existence of persons who act what ought not to be acted, make the whole—to an educated sense of fairness—more like moral chaos than the expected moral cosmos. With this appalling spectacle, daily presented, can we retain hold of the indispensable presupposition of human experience? Can the suspicious facts be reconciled with the ethical postulate, and so a total sceptical breakdown which dissolves experience be avoided?

Considerations which mitigate the pressure of the dilemma, between need for

In this dilemma between faith in our universe and final doubt, considerations were suggested to mitigate the pressure of the strange facts which threaten to subvert the needed moral trust. Thus, for all that we can show to the contrary, it may be a sign of perfect goodness that there should be in existence, on educational

a morally trustworthy universe, and signs of its untrustworthiness.

trial, morally responsible persons, who have power to make and keep themselves bad—notwithstanding the *risks* of this divine experiment—rather than that there should not be persons on moral trial at all, but instead a wholly non-moral, or physically necessitated, universe. If one takes account of fallible moral agents on probation, as at least the *humanly related* purpose which the Whole is making for, at the only human point of view, it may well be that the universe emptied of persons—even such persons as men have made themselves—would realise a less divine ideal to that under which sin and suffering appear.

Signs of progressive improvement.

Moreover, one may suggest that the enigma presented on this planet is relieved by the signs of human progress also presented, when its history is interpreted as divinely conducted education of all who will permit themselves to be divinely educated. Progressive improvement on the whole, but which often seems to convert progress into regress—rather than original and endless moral perfection—may be the only economy adapted to a divine world that includes *persons on trial.*

A larger revelation than the merely physical one, adapted to make the bad good, may be implied in the moral postulate of physical experience.

Still more when there is reasonable room for a reinforcement of the progressive movement by what to us may seem unique action of the Universal Power, "at sundry times and in divers manners," according to a rational order more comprehensive than that which men recognise in their physical experience, and which in this sense may be called miraculous—determined by its relations to persons who have made themselves bad, in rejecting the divine ideal; so that their dormant faith and hope has to be vivified and enlightened, in order to their moral recovery — all through divine incarnation in the Ideal Man, the consummation of divine incarnation in External Nature.

The conditions of human life on earth seem to ask, under the theistic postulate, for its rectification or

Furthermore, sceptical disintegration of final faith and hope in the Universal Power may be arrested, by the consideration that the present tragedy of sin and suffering on this planet is not extended enough in time and place to explain its final meaning and universal issues. The curtain falls at the beginning of the first act. If men are living in a morally trustworthy universe, in filial

confidence that the issues need not in the end put them to intellectual and moral confusion, this would seem to imply for them a longer and larger life than that on this earth—a life in which perfection will be found by the tried agents to underlie the apparent indifference, caprice, or cruelty of the secular drama. For physical death need not end the conscious life of persons who die physically; and the primary moral postulate of experience may even imply a reasonable faith and hope that this is not so, in a divinely constituted universe. The moral chaos now on this planet, so apt to be disintegrative of moral trust in the Universal Power, and therefore in all human experience, may be relieved through a now inconceivable after-life of the moral agents, after the curtain falls in death. explanation.

These considerations, afforded by a larger philosophy than the science which is only physical can offer, tend to sustain the moral trust and hope in the Universal Power which is at the root of experience—without which human life is hollow illusion,—no divine voice heard in the drama of Nature, no spiritual inspirations in and through Man,—the whole uninterpretable—human nature, in all its faculties and inevitable postulates, a vain illusion. It is the inevitable sceptical and pessimist alternative in this dilemma that makes theistic optimism, with its rational consequences, the highest human philosophy; so that we are obliged in reason to rest in final faith and hope, unless its incoherence can be demonstrated, dissolving experience and its divine postulate, along with science and goodness, in a common ruin. The extinction of theistic faith is the extinction of reason in man. Aids to perplexed faith.

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